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REACTION TO RECONSTRUCTION: JOHN FORSYTH AND THE MOBILE ADVERTISER AND REGISTER, 1865-1867

by

John Kent Folmar

During most of the nineteenth century the local newspaper was the primary, and often the only, source of media information; and politics was the most popular topic of conversation and disputation. Therefore, a local editor was usually both influential and powerful.¹ Despite this situation, there are relatively few national, regional, or local studies of editors or important newspapers of the lower South. In order to "fill this gap" somewhat, this project is a study of John Forsyth's editorial reaction to Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867, in order to identify the primary political issues and to measure their relative significance.²

Forsyth was the eldest surviving son and namesake of the nationally prominent Jacksonian statesman and diplomat. After a successful career as a lawyer, planter, and editor of the Columbus (Ga.) *Times*, the younger Forsyth moved to Mobile in 1853, where, at the age of 41, he began the second phase of his distinguished career as a sometime politician and diplomat, and journalist, par excellence.³ The new editor of the already prestigious *Mobile Register* quickly established himself as a leading state, regional, and nationally known (and respected) editor who reflected the city's booming commercial

¹Howard K. Beale, *The Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958), 320-24.

²Forsyth has not been too popular with historians. The writer located only two works: Luther N. Steward, Jr., "John Forsyth," *Alabama Review*, XIV (April, 1961), 98-123, and David R. Chesnutt, "John Forsyth: A Southern Partisan (1865-1867)" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Auburn University, 1967). Steward concentrates on Forsyth's diplomatic career.

³Alvin L. Duckett, *John Forsyth: Political Tactician* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1962), 6, 182; Charles G. Summersell, *Mobile, History of a Seaport Town* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1949), 28; B. F. Riley, *Makers and Romance of Alabama History*, (n.p.:n.d.), 87-88, 90-91; *The National Cyclopedic of Biography* (New York: James T. White and Co., 1900), 471. Forsyth resided in Mobile from 1835 to 1841 while he served as United States District Attorney for South Alabama and edited the *Mobile Times*.

economy, cosmopolitan cultural life, and his Unionist Democratic politics during the sectional crises of the 1850s. As a delegate to the Cincinnati convention in 1856, he supported the Douglas wing of the Democratic party. The same year he was appointed by President Pierce as Minister to Mexico, where he served for two tumultuous years. By 1859, he was sole owner of the *Register* and he was elected to the state assembly. He continued to support the Douglas wing of the party against the Yancey faction, both in the state convention of 1860 and the aborted Charleston convention. Forsyth led the state's "regular" Democratic delegation that was subsequently seated in Baltimore, after which he campaigned for Douglas during the presidential election.⁴ He was elected mayor of Mobile in 1860, and, with Alabama's secession and the organization of the C.S.A., President Davis named him as one of the three "peace" commissioners in the ill-fated effort to negotiate with the Lincoln government.⁵

In June, 1861, the *Register* merged with W. W. Clark's *Advertiser* and Forsyth continued as editor. After serving briefly on General B.B. Bragg's staff, he returned to Mobile where he "warmly" sustained the "cause" and provided superior coverage of the war. The *Advertiser and Register* was one of the last major newspapers to cease publication in the Confederacy — he did not evacuate Mobile until a few days prior to General E. R. S. Canby's occupation of the city on April 12, 1865.⁶ Canby soon requested that Forsyth resume

⁴Mobile *Register*, July 19, 1859; Robert W. Johannsen, "Stephen A. Douglas and the South," *Journal of Southern History*, XXXIII (Feb., 1967), 47; Austin L. Venable, "The Conflict Between the Douglas and Yancey Forces in the Charleston Convention," *Journal of Southern History*, VIII (May, 1942), 231; Lewy Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860* (Wetumpka: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), 156, 158; William Garrett, *Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama*, (Atlanta: Plantation Publications, 1872), 731, hereafter cited as *Reminiscences*; Clarence P. Denman, *The Secession Movement in Alabama* (Montgomery: 1933), 109; Steward, "John Forsyth," 103-16. The *Register* office was located at 6 North Royal Street.

⁵Ludwell H. Johnson, "Ft. Sumter and Confederate Diplomacy," *Journal of Southern History*, XXVI (Nov., 1960), 445; Steward, "John Forsyth," 117; Garrett, *Reminiscences*, 731; Riley, *Makers and Romance of Alabama History*, 89.

⁶Durward Long, "Unanimity and Disloyalty in Secessionist Alabama," *Civil War History*, XI (1965), 261-62; Caldwell Delaney, *The Story of Mobile* (Mobile: Gill Printing Co., 1953), 140-42; Erwin Craighead, *Mobile: Fact and Tradi-*

the publication of his journal in an effort, according to Forsyth, "to reconcile the people to the new order of things." However, it required over two months before the military authorities returned his property.⁷ Not only did he resume the publication of the paper without harrassment, but he was also appointed acting mayor by the military authorities.⁸

Beginning with July 18, 1865, the first paper available, through March 31, 1867, there are 622 days. However, there is no record for 169 days (27 per cent) and 110 papers contained little or no substantive opinion on Reconstruction issues (18 per cent). Therefore, this study deals with 340 editions (ca. 55 per cent) of the *Advertiser and Register* over an approximate twenty months period.⁹ (See Table I in Appendix) For comparative purposes, I divided this slice of history into three parts. The first part is from the first available newspaper to December 20, 1865, when R.M. Patton became the first elected governor to assume office after the war. During the summer and fall of 1865, the lenient Johnson or presidential plan of Reconstruction was completed — he thought!¹⁰ Within this 156 day period, 100 newspapers were scanned (64 per cent) for significant data (See Table II), and, despite the complexity of separating issues that are often inter-related, four major issues were identified: the state's political re-

tion, *Noteworthy People and Events* (Mobile: The Powers Printing Co., 1930), 174. Forsyth's journalistic role in the war is in J. Cutler Andrews, *The South Reports the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), Chapter 8 and *passim*.

⁷Mobile *Advertiser and Register*, Oct. 5, 10, 1865, hereafter cited as *Adv.-Reg*.

⁸*Adv.-Reg.* July 22, 1865; Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905), 430.

⁹The remaining *Adv.-Reg.* file is located in the Alabama Collection, University of Alabama Library (see Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *History and Bibliography of Alabama Newspapers in the Nineteenth Century* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1954), 107-108). A paper was not published on Mondays. The writer is aware of the inherent problems in drawing conclusions from partial data, i.e., 55 per cent of the total number of newspapers, however, this is the case with most impressionistic studies and this sample is more than adequate according to current sampling techniques.

¹⁰For brief, and contrasting, summaries of Presidential Reconstruction, see Fleming, 349-75 and James G. Randall and David Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1969), 558-63. The Thirty-ninth Congress would not convene until December, and Johnson refused to call a special session.

storation, the "Radicals," the freedmen, and President Johnson. (See Table III)

Fifty-six editorials (ca. 42 per cent of the total), wholly or in part, related to the primary issue — the political restoration of government. Accepting the results of the war, that is, defeat and the end of slavery, Forsyth, in ca. 34 editorials, urged the speedy organization of an elected state government that would replace the quasi-military "civilian" regime.¹¹ He reiterated the necessity of taking the amnesty oath. Voter registration was also required in order to send men of "unsullied integrity and known ability" to the constitutional convention called to revise Alabama's Confederate constitution. The convention, he thought, should not go beyond "repealing the ordinance of secession, and declaring the will of the people to be restored to their former Federal relations with the other states of the Union, and ordaining the extinction of African slavery, as a state institution."¹²

When the convention convened on September 12, Forsyth suggested that it should provide for the veterans and *not* repudiate the state's war debts.¹³ Since most of this bonded indebtedness was held in Mobile, he declared, in ca. 12 editorials, that the debts were "a sacred charge upon the property and energy of the state," and to repudiate them would indicate "that we are scoundrels and traitors because we were beaten." The debts were repudiated as required by President Johnson and Forsyth wrote: "... there is nothing to do but submit to it." Although he approved most of the convention's work, he continued to lament repudiation and, with the state's declining economic situation, he predicted that the state would "repent in

¹¹ *Adv.-Reg.* July 18, 22, 29, 1865; Albert B. Moore, *History of Alabama* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1934), 461-62. On June 21, President Johnson appointed Lewis E. Parsons, of Talladega, provisional governor. For the significance of haste in restoring the "old relationships" see Sylvia Cook, "Restoration and Innovation: Alabama's Adjustments to Defeat, 1865-1867," (unpublished dissertation, University of Alabama, 1968).

¹² *Adv.-Reg.* Aug. 19, also July 30; Aug. 10, 27, 23, 24, 1865. President Johnson, by proclamation, required that the constitutional convention abolish slavery, repudiate the state's Confederate debt, and declare secession null and void.

¹³ *Adv.-Reg.* Sept. 12, 1865; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 359. Forsyth seemed uninterested in the apportionment and representation battle in the convention.

sackcloth and ashes."¹⁴

Forsyth devoted little space to the general state election scheduled for November 6. There was not much interest! On the day before the election, he complained that no one wanted to seek office in the First District. On election day, he wrote that the annual auction in the market stalls and an "election whiskey" brawl caused more interest than balloting. Nor did he seem too interested, editorially, in the newly elected legislative Assembly which met on November 20, except for the proposed Thirteenth Amendment (see below). One factor may have been his political ambitions — on November 28, when the Assembly met to select two new U. S. Senators, Forsyth was "in the running" for the two year, short-term seat until he lost on the fourth ballot.¹⁵

Concomitant with the state's political reorganization was the question of whether Congress would accept the Southern delegations when it convened on December 4. Since July, and in 9 subsequent editorials, Forsyth had predicted that "The arrival of the Southern delegation at Washington, will apply a test of unionism of the members of Congress. . . ." By mid-October he warned that if they were not seated "It will put thoughts of resistance and force in minds where they have never entered before." During November there were rumors that the Southerners would not be seated. When the First Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress convened on December 4, the delegations were *not* seated. Forsyth reacted in his usual reasoned manner by writing: "We hope the South will keep out of the fight and maintain both coolness and dignity." He urged the South to "be patient and faithfully fulfill the obligation of duty to the Government of the United States. . . ."¹⁶

¹⁴*Adv.-Reg.* Aug. 22; Sept. 17, 28, 30; Oct. 1, 6, 7, 24; Nov. 9, 17, 1865. The best accounts of the work of the convention are Fleming, 358-70 and Malcolm C. McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1789-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 90-109.

¹⁵*Adv.-Reg.* Nov. 3, 5, 7, 10; Dec. 1, 1865; James K. Greer, ed., John Wither-
spoon DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade: Ten Years of Alabama, 1865-1874*
(Birmingham: Webb Book Co., 1940), 60. R. M. Patton, of Lauderdale County,
was elected governor. The turnout was light.

¹⁶*Adv.-Reg.* July 22; Aug. 2; Oct. 8, 17, 29; Nov. 7, 11, 28; Dec. 6, 7, 1865;
Moore, *History of Alabama*, 466; Randall and Donald, *The Civil War and Re-
construction*, 574. The nonseating of the Southern delegations was a delaying
tactic and the first Radical-sponsored victory over Johnson.

Intermeshed with the state's political restoration was Forsyth's vehement criticisms of the Radical Republicans, who favored a more stringent reconstruction policy. Though apparently disdaining partisan politics, he continued to castigate the Radicals in ca. 31 "non-partisan" editorials (23 per cent). Using his best pre-war Democratic prose, he described the entire party as the Radical "party"; in fact, he seldom used the word Republican. For example, in late July, he referred to "the extreme doctrine of the Radicals," and a few days later he opined that they "would work the inevitable ruin of the country, either landing it upon a bloody, grinding tyranny, or launching it upon a new sea of anarchy and revolution." He earnestly felt that the Radicals hoped that the state's constitutional convention would fail to accomplish Johnson's requirements for restoration. In mid-September, when the convention was in session, Forsyth stepped up his attacks on the Radicals. He referred to them as the "Disunion party" and suggested that if they won "the Southern man who has the smallest self-respect had better take the map of the world, and pick out some spot that offers the best chance of peace and refuge from tyranny. . . ." With the convention's adjournment, Forsyth saw nothing that would prevent the state's rehabilitation except "the venom and party interests of the Radical enemies to re-union."¹⁷ During October and November, he continued to comment in a rather general, non-specific manner. However, when the Southern delegations were not seated in Congress, he unleashed another series of verbal assaults on the "Disunionists," the "Puritan school of politics," and the "Black Republicans" who had "never desired the restoration of the Union. . . ." Then, predictably, he urged patience, and debated the constitutional question of whether the Southern states were in the Union or not.¹⁸

Approximately 31 editorials (23 per cent) concerned the sensitive white-freedmen relationships, including the treatment of blacks, the Freedmen's Bureau, and black suffrage. One of the significant Radical complaints, particularly in some

¹⁷*Adv.-Reg.* July 25; Aug. 6, 10; Sept. 3, 10, 14, 15, 22, 29, 1865. Forsyth used information gleaned from other newspapers to attack the Radicals or to substantiate his own views on Reconstruction. For example, see *Adv.-Reg.* Sept. 3, 15, 16; Oct. 22, 1865.

¹⁸*Adv.-Reg.* Oct. 14, 20, 28; Nov. 2, 10; Dec. 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 20, 1865.

Northern newspapers, was that the blacks were not being treated humanely. In at least 10 editorials, Forsyth illustrated that that was not the case and that the freedmen and the whites were adjusting to the new social and economic order. Recognizing the importance of the freedmen to the South's (and Mobile's) economic recovery, he pleaded that their labor be utilized. "The first step," he wrote in early September, "is to discountenance everything that increases the present tendency to antagonism between the whites and the blacks. Nothing but evil can come of this. . . ." ¹⁹

The Freedmen Bureau's primary function was to help the blacks in the critical transitional stage from slavery to freedom, and Forsyth devoted at least 9 editorials to it and its state commissioner, General Wager Swayne. In August and September, Forsyth consistently advised that the white people not oppose Swayne's authority. By October, however, in three editorials he wrote (while not attacking Swayne in person) that the agency "must go" and predicted that the organization "is destined to be broken!" ²⁰

What did Forsyth fear most from the Radicals? It seemed to be the possible political effects of black suffrage. In 12 editorials, he deplored the Radical "agitation" for Negro suffrage, and quoted S. A. Douglas' statement that "This is a white man's government and we will keep it so if we are wise." In August, he thought that the proposed Thirteenth Amendment, that would end slavery nationally, would hasten black suffrage and "deprive the whites of the power over their own legislation." With black suffrage, he wrote in September, "We could not live together sixty days. . . ." In October, and in late November, when the state Assembly was considering ratification of the proposed amendment, Forsyth contended that its enforcement clause clothed "The Federal Congress with power over the Black codes of the States," and that the Radicals would

¹⁹*Adv.-Reg.* Sept. 9; Oct. 11, 22; Nov. 16; Dec. 19, 1865. Forsyth insisted that the blacks were not treated in the North or West in the manner that the Radicals allegedly desired; hence, he resented making the South a special case. See Sept. 3, 15, 16; Oct. 22, 1865.

²⁰*Adv.-Reg.* Aug. 12, 16, 20; Sept. 5, 27, 30; Oct. 8, 14, 25, 1865. For a conservative evaluation of the Bureau's activities in Alabama, see Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 444-51.

"make it a pretext for perpetual and vexatious interference of the South."²¹

To whom did Forsyth appeal for succor as a foil against the Radical "enemy?" From the beginning, as a Southern, Unionist Democrat he, in ca. 16 editorials (12 per cent), upheld Johnson and his plan of reconstruction. For example, in mid-July he wrote that: "Happily . . . the President . . . does not belong to the class of vindictive warriors [who would prey] upon a disarmed people. He holds that these states have never been out of the Union . . . [and] . . . his plain duty is to see the State governments are at once reorganized." In early September, Forsyth predicted that "he is going to succeed . . . and write his name . . . as a Benefactor and Liberator." He applauded Johnson's "iron firmness" against the Radicals and, when the President insisted in his State of the Union message on December 4 that the Southern states *were* restored, Forsyth wrote: "He has thrown down the gauntlet to the Sumners and Stevens of the Puritan school of politics. . . . The Conservative men of the nation and the whole South will stand by him in the deadly duel, because he is the champion of constitutional liberty." A few days later, Forsyth predicted, correctly, that "If he does not whip the Radicals in this fight, they will crush him."²²

There are 324 days in Part II, that is, from December 21, 1865, when Governor Patton assumed office until November 9, 1866, when the results of the northern congressional elections were known. Editorials in 175 newspapers, or 54 per cent of the total, were analyzed. (See Table IV) With President

²¹*Adv.-Reg.* July 18, 20, 21, 28; Aug. 10; Sept. 6, 12, 30; Oct. 30; Nov. 8, 29; Dec. 5, 20, 1865. Ratification of the proposed Thirteenth Amendment was another requirement by President Johnson. Forsyth did not question the freeing of the slaves, but questioned the second section of the amendment which read: "Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation." When the Assembly ratified the amendment, a clause was added stating that it did not confer upon Congress the power to control the political status of the freedmen in Alabama. See Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 373. The following appeared on Nov. 7 under a general news column: "Black joke—negro suffrage."

²²*Adv.-Reg.* Aug. 10; Sept. 10, 17, 21, 23, 27; Nov. 9, 10; Dec. 9, 13, 15, 20, 1865. Charles Sumner (Rep., Mass.) and Thaddeus Stevens (Rep., Penna.) were leading Radicals in the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively.

Johnson insisting that the Southern states were restored, and with the newly created Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction (Committee of Fifteen) conducting hearings to determine if that was the case, Forsyth's editorials shifted almost exclusively to the national political arena where he reacted to specific, and selected, congressional legislation, the erosion of the President's plan, and the emergence of partisan politics — in which he participated. (See Table V)

Approximately one-half of the editorials for this ten and one-half month period relate to reconstruction activities in Congress. Of these 61 editorials, 25 (ca. 21 per cent) concern the Radicals, who are still represented as *the* Republican party. Forsyth's criticisms continued to be rather general, e.g., on Christmas Eve, 1865, he wrote: "we have done enough. We owe it to ourselves . . . to do no more. . . . Now all depends on the President and the good heart of the North to deal with the revolutionists in Congress." Throughout January and February, 1866, he persistently predicted, however, that the Radicals would fail. In 17 editorials, he used the columns of Northern newspapers to comment on any (rumored or otherwise) evidence of divisions within their ranks.²³

There is almost no remarks on the Joint Reconstruction Committee's hearings until late March, nor is there, seemingly, much interest in Republican efforts to extend the life of the Freedmen's Bureau and Johnson's successful veto of the measure. Even more significantly, there is no editorial comment relative to the passage, on March 15, of the Civil Rights Bill which would counter the more "extreme" Black Codes recently legislated in the South. When Congress, including Radical *and* moderate Republicans, overrode Johnson's veto, Forsyth believed that "The executive barrier against unchastened fanaticism has been virtually broken down." The next day (April 12), he wrote: "If American blood shall flow once more, . . . this time . . . the South will be innocent of the provocation." On April 15, apparently unaware of what was happening in Congress, he concluded that the Civil Rights Act was not as

²³Only 7 (5 per cent) of the 61 editorials relating to the Radicals were written after August 3, 1866. On January 5, 1866, Forsyth lamented that the New York *Times* had "gone over" to the Radicals. For alleged evidence of the Radicals' demise, see Jan. 5, 17, 18, 23, 24, 1866.

serious as the non-seating of Southern congressmen and he thought that "We have already felt the worst, and have little to apprehend from that sort of legislation."²⁴

In early May, the Reconstruction Committee proposed an amendment that would incorporate the Radical program in the Constitution. In ca. 7 editorials, written in May and mid-June, Forsyth searched for any "thread" of Northern opposition and wondered, almost to himself: "What is to be the end of all this. . . !" On June 12, four days before the proposed Fourteenth Amendment was submitted to the states for ratification, Forsyth wrote, under a column headed for the first time with the words "Radical Reconstruction":

A part of this reconstruction plan of the Radicals proceeds upon the idea of Southern help. We are to ratify, in our legislature, the constitutional amendment that seals our disenfranchisement and degeneration. Here, at least, we can assert our rights . . . and die at the stake before we help the Radicals hangmen put the rope around our free necks.

Forsyth did not mention the submission of the proposed Fourteenth Amendment to the states until late June. He wondered if the Radicals would prevent the eleven Southern states from voting on it. He considered *that* to be another Radical plot; then, a few days later he insisted that the Southern legislatures oppose the amendment. Not until October, because of his involvement in politics, did Forsyth discuss the proposed amendment, and, in 3 of 4 editorials, he suggested that ratification would not guarantee that the South would be represented in Congress.²⁵

²⁴*Adv.-Reg.* March 21; April 8; May 6, 9, 11; June 12, 13, 1866. On Jan. 26, Forsyth observed that the Radicals were "maturing a law" that would give the Negroes "all rights" and on Feb. 20 Johnson's veto of the Freedmen's Bureau extension bill was noted without comment. This veto was his last victory as the Republicans overrode every subsequent Reconstruction measure, beginning with the Civil Rights bill on April 9. See Randall and Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* 578-80. Alabama's "Black Code" was moderate according to Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 383-86.

²⁵*Adv.-Reg.* May 9; June 22, 24, 28, 29; Oct. 4, 13, 19; Nov. 4, 1866. See May 6, 11, 29 and June 2 fore alleged "Northern" opposition to the Reconstruction Committee's report. In May, only 6 of 24 editorials related to the Radicals and

As in 1865, Forsyth, during 1866, continued to support President Johnson against the Radicals. Gradually, however, open, partisan politics fused with this important issue to a significant degree. Fifty-one editorials (ca. 42 per cent) related to politics, of which 28 concern Johnson directly. In fact, between late December, 1865, and mid-February, 1866 (despite his deep pessimism only a few days earlier), Forsyth continuously praised the President in a hopefully optimistic tone, e.g.:

No man who has lived in this country has ever occupied a position comparable in grandeur and responsibility to that which is the fortune of a man, sprung from the people, . . . to hold this hour. He alone . . . has the way to the Temple which bigotry and hatred are burning to profane. He must hold the pass and defend the outposts . . . as the savior of the constitution of this country.

His weapon, of course, would be the presidential veto; hence, when the Senate failed to override his veto of the First Freedmen's Bureau Bill on February 21, Forsyth was cautiously optimistic.²⁶

The most important political development of 1866, for Forsyth, was the pro-Johnson Conservative movement which

11 had little or no comment on Reconstruction issues. Only 7 editorials concerned the Fourteenth Amendment in June, July, and November. Enacted by Congress in mid-June, the amendment was submitted to the states for ratification on July 16. The President advised the states *not* to ratify it. Only Tennessee, of the former Confederate states, approved it. See Randall and Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* 580-84. The New Orleans riot was noted on July 31 without comment. Also, there was no apparent interest in the passage, over Johnson's veto, of the second Freedmen's Bureau bill on July 10.

²⁶*Adv.-Reg.* Dec. 22, 27, 31, 1865; Jan. 18, 24; Feb. 4, 13, 22; Mar. 1, 4, 6, 9, 31, 1866. There were 4 pro-Johnson editorials in April. Forsyth mentioned the possibility of impeachment on Mar. 21 and April 12, 1866. See Chesnutt, "John Forsyth: A Southern Partisan," 61-63. When Johnson issued on April 2, his "peace proclamation" that would presumably end martial law in the South, Forsyth prayed: "Let us give thanks to God . . . Hallelujah!" A week later, however, after Congress had overridden Johnson's veto of the Civil Rights bill, he concluded: "The executive barrier against unchastened fanaticism has been virtually broken down." By April 20, he was convinced that the proclamation "amounted to little or nothing."

led to the National Union convention in Philadelphia. Approximately 17 editorials concern this issue. Refusing to write openly as a partisan Democrat during the fall of 1865, he, by January, 1866, finally concluded: "Does not . . . restoration depend upon the Democracy?" Thereafter, he occasionally applauded Democratic successes in the north and northwest, but he usually preferred to use the term "Conservative" instead of Democrat. On July 4, however, he reported the call by Democrats and Conservative Republicans for a national "Union" convention. Initially, Forsyth thought that "The remedy is inadequate to reach the disease." By July 8, he reasoned that it *might* "unite all the friends of constitutional freedom." Hence, in a flurry of editorial rhetoric (13 editorials in 16 days), he enthusiastically endorsed the effort and defended it against its detractors. As during the 1850s, he personally participated in local Democratic activities, and was convinced that "The government can only be restored to its constitutional pedestal by virtue of the principles of the Democratic party." On July 22, he was selected as a delegate to a state convention in Selma; there, he was chosen as a member of Alabama's delegation to the Philadelphia convention.²⁷

The "arm-in-arm" convention met in mid-August. After the convention adjourned, Forsyth stayed in the northeast for a few weeks. He had planned to accompany Johnson on his "swing around the circle" speaking tour in late August and September, but he was too ill. Back at his desk in October, and disillusioned by the apparent failure of the "Union movement," he wrote that the "disinterested Government is drifting without rudder, God only knows where." More significantly, he was forced to admit that, in the upcoming congressional elections, "The Radicals have a strong emotional appeal against rebels."²⁸

²⁷*Adv.-Reg.* Jan. 9, Feb. 13, Apr. 3, July 1, 1866. Forsyth apparently did not appreciate the possible Republican reaction to a unified Democracy. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 40; Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in Alabama and the Lower South, 1860-1867," *Alabama Review*, XII (Jan., 1959), 47-48.

²⁸Between Aug. 17 and Oct. 25, 31 of 48 newspapers (64 per cent) contained no editorial comments relative to Reconstruction. Neither is there any criticisms of Johnson's intemperate speeches during his "swing around the circle." Reconciled to defeat, Forsyth wrote on Nov. 6 (election day) that the Radicals were really looking to the presidential election of 1868 and that they were excluding the Southern vote in order to elect their candidate. *Adv.-Reg.* Sept. 4,

There was little editorial interest in the freedmen during Part II. Of the 9 editorials, suffrage was mentioned only twice — in late January, he wrote that the House of Representatives had passed, with conservative support, a suffrage bill for the District of Columbia. Then, about a month later, he suggested that if martial law and the Freedmen's Bureau continued, Negro suffrage would make little difference. Paternalistically, he continued to emphasize that the Southern white was the true friend of the freedmen, e.g., in early January he reported that the rumored uprisings during Christmas were exaggerations and that their behavior was "marked by moderation and forbearance." In only 4 editorials during February does he rather mildly criticize the "intermeddling" and the "extra legal" activities of the Freedmen's Bureau.²⁹

Sixty-five newspapers (45 per cent) were searched in Part III, which is from the recent Republican congressional victory to March 31, 1867, when Radical Reconstruction began. (See Table VI) This period is marked by a great deal of confusion in the incipient transition from one reconstruction plan to another. Radical reconstruction is the primary issue and the freedmen, President Johnson, and the Supreme Court are mini-issues. (See Table VII)

Forsyth's mood is indicated in a November editorial. He wrote: "We are helplessly in their [the Radicals] mercy . . . and have little to expect besides grinding taxes and political servitude." Over one-half of the editorials concerned his reactions to Radical Reconstruction, particularly the Fourteenth Amendment and manifestations of "Congressional Reconstruction" at the state level. The proposed Fourteenth Amendment was being considered by the Alabama Assembly and, in at least 7 editorials, Forsyth continued to oppose it. He still maintained that there was no assurance that its ratification was all that the Radicals desired, e.g., "Our honor is our last priceless possession. . . . We know not what political miseries may be in store

⁵ 6, 15, 16; Oct. 4, 5, 1866. On Oct. 28, he discussed the possibility of Johnson's impeachment again. The Republicans easily won two-thirds majorities in both Houses of Congress, and the governorship in every Northern state. See Rembert W. Patrick, *The Reconstruction of the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 85-89.

²⁹ *Adv.-Reg.* Jan. 10, 26; Feb. 6, 10, 20, 27, 1866. Forsyth consistently deplored the poor health care available for the freedmen.

for us . . . [but] . . . no depth of self-humiliation will avail to save us from them." When the Assembly refused to ratify the proposed amendment on December 6, Forsyth compared it to "a Trojan horse sought to be introduced into our gates."³⁰

When the Southern legislatures refused to ratify the proposed amendment, Republicans in the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress considered various proposals to establish a "Congressional plan" of Reconstruction. In ca. 15 editorials, Forsyth concentrated on the more radical, i.e., Stevens proposals. In December, 1866, he thought that the Stevens plan to return the states to the territorial stage was absurd and bound to fail. Not until early February did he report a rumor of "something big" in Washington, and on February 7, he printed the new "Stevens military reconstruction plan." A revised bill passed the House on February 13 and the Senate began to consider it. After further revision, a compromise bill was passed by Congress, over Johnson's veto, on March 2. By February 28, it was apparent to Forsyth that the bill would become law. He wrote: "There is no more American Union. It died with the Constitution, which was the life of its body. Yancey is triumphant. We now wait for the curtain to rise on the next act of the great drama." On March 2, when he printed the Military Reconstruction Act, he added: "Not recommended for good reading." Then, he began to search for political alternatives, and concluded, correctly, that three variables in the new order would be (1) the personal character of the new district commanders appointed by Johnson, (2) how Johnson "enforced the extraordinary law," and (3) how the new state constitutional conventions "are to be called."³¹

³⁰*Adv.-Reg.* Nov. 11, 15, 16, 25; Dec. 2, 8, 1866; Jan. 9, 22; Feb. 28, 1867. Governor Patton favored ratification of the amendment. See Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 396-97. J. F. Rhodes thought that the Assembly might have ratified it, had not Johnson opposed it so adamantly. See *History of the United States* (New York: McMillan and Co., 1928), VI, 118-19. The data for Part III is not, of course, as important as the foregoing data because it represents reactions to the early stages of the new, congressional plan of Reconstruction, not to the final plan which took months to mature.

³¹*Adv.-Reg.* Dec. 18, 28, 1866; Feb. 6, 7, 9, 14, 17, 21, 28; Mar. 5, 9, 1867. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* 473-74; Randall and Donald, 596-98. The Military Reconstruction Act divided the South into five districts with an army general in charge of a new reconstruction plan based on black suffrage and the Fourteenth Amendment. A supplementary bill, enacted on Mar. 23, initiated the new era.

By mid-March, it was apparent that the political situation had come full circle. After almost twenty months, the state government was again center stage. In 7 editorials during the balance of March, Forsyth concentrated on state politics. Stressing "conservative" unity, he opposed the embryonic "radical-Union" movement which would "divide the people and send Radical representatives to Congress." He preferred to wait until General John Pope, the newly appointed commander of the Third Military District, arrived in Montgomery and began to implement the Military Reconstruction Act — and then react. Delay, of course, became the primary Conservative strategum during the spring and summer of 1867.³²

Although only ten editorials related to the freedmen, Forsyth, in 8 of these, began to cautiously write about the possibility of a qualified black suffrage as in Massachusetts. But, he noted that the notion of impartial black suffrage would be "a proposition, the solution of which we are not able to perceive." He also felt that it would allow the planters, by controlling the black votes, to erect another political aristocracy "more powerful than before the war." On January 10, he approved Johnson's veto of the District of Columbia franchise bill — but it had already been passed over his veto! Then, with the passage of the Military Reconstruction Act, Forsyth's tone changed dramatically. Suddenly, "the black men [were] . . . Southerners as well as the whites." To avoid the Radical program, he wrote on March 19, "we have only to be united ourselves, deal justly with the negroes and tell them kindly and honestly the naked truth as to the course which their own intentions and happiness require them to pursue, . . . and when it is found at Washington that Southern negroes are going with Southern people . . . the effect in the Radical Congress will be that of a bombshell." In late March, he was hopeful that "respectable colored men" would avoid the upcoming "Radical-union" convention in Montgomery.³³

President Johnson, apparently, was no longer a potent force in Reconstruction politics. Of 7 editorials, 5 related to the possibility of impeachment. In early December, while discussing Johnson's second State of the Union message, Forsyth

³²*Adv.-Reg.* Mar. 12, 13, 19, 22, 24, 26, 1867. Fleming, 474-75.

³³*Adv.-Reg.* Nov. 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 1866; Mar. 13, 26, 28, 1867.

mourned: "He has fought a good fight. . . ." After Christmas, he rather lamely prognosticated that Johnson would "in time solve the great problems upon sound principles." When, on January 7, the House passed a resolution directing the Judiciary Committee to consider impeachment, Forsyth immediately predicted the President's removal from office. Later in the month, however, he was not as sure.³⁴

Forsyth's final hope, that the Supreme Court would declare the recent Reconstruction legislation unconstitutional, was increased by two recent decisions. He characterized this development as "A Gleam," but in January and February, with rumors that Congress would curb the court's functions, he predicted the end of the court. With the passage of the Military Reconstruction Act, he wrote that there was "no hope"; then, a few days later he suggested, weakly, that the Supreme Court "has yet to decide the . . . issue."³⁵

The primary political issues, according to John Forsyth, of Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867, are delineated in the Appendix with an approximate significance factor (percentage) assigned to each. During the summer and fall of 1865, he keyed his editorial to selected aspects of the state's political re-orientation, criticized the Radicals as the party of "disunion," and accepted the economic, but not the social and political, manifestations of the end of slavery. Careful not to alienate the local military authorities, and trying to remain as non-partisan as possible, he accepted President Johnson's "status quo" plan of reconstruction. During 1866, truly the "critical year," he focused on selected topics within the emerging Republican reactions to Johnson's plan of reconstruction, on partisan, Democratic politics, and to a far less extent, the freedmen. He apparently did not comprehend, and, of course, to report the significance of the "feelings" in the North that (1) the treatment of the blacks had become an emotional, if abstract, issue; (2) how the "Black Codes" (not necessarily in Alabama) were being

³⁴*Adv. Reg.* Dec. 6, 28, 1866; Jan. 10, 17, 27, 1867. In November and December 1866, Forsyth did not think that the Radicals were serious about impeaching Johnson. See Nov. 24, Dec. 4, 1866.

³⁵*Adv.-Reg.* Dec. 19, 1866; Jan. 10, 18, 22, 24, 29; Mar. 14, 1867. The *Ex Parte Milligan* case disallowed a martial law verdict if civil courts were open and the Test Oath Cases were declared to be *ex post facto* when test oaths were required for clergymen and lawyers. Rhodes, *History of the United States*, 122-24.

interpreted in the Radical media; and (3) how the potential rise of the Democratic party was looked upon with great alarm in Republican, not just Radical, quarters. Most of all, viewing politics through his Democratic lens, he did not see, until he went to the Northeast, that the Republicans could win in the fall congressional elections. The partisan effort failed, and when the Fourteenth Amendment was not ratified in early 1867, a new, complex, and confusing reconstruction plan evolved. Forsyth immediately reacted in a "wait and see" manner — he urged delay and courted the omnipresent black vote. When it became apparent that the Republicans would control the blacks, he helped organize the white, conservative, anti-Republican coalition that opposed the "black and tan" regimes until the state's "redemption" in 1874.³⁶

An urban and urbane elitist, John Forsyth was one of the more notable Southern journalists of the nineteenth century. Probably no man in the history of Alabama devoted more energy to what he determined the political and economic course the state should follow — only to be forgotten in the process. Hopefully, Clio's patrons will soon rectify this error in scholarly interest.

³⁶Forsyth and Clark sold the paper to Col. William D. Mann in 1867 and Forsyth continued to edit the renamed *Register* until his death on May 2, 1877. Craighead, *Mobile Fact and Tradition*, 174-75; *Mobile Daily Register*, May 4, 1877; T. C. DeLeon, *Centennial Remembrance Book of Col. John Forsyth* (n.p.: 1912).

A P P E N D I X

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF DATA

Total No. Days — July 18, 1865 -	
March 31, 1867	622
No. Days with no editorial information	-110
No. Days with no available newspaper	-169
No. Days editorial "cut out"	-3
<hr/>	
No. Days <i>Adv.-Reg.</i> used in study	340 (55%)

TABLE II
DATA FOR PART I—July 18, 1865-Dec. 20, 1865

Total No. Days	156
No. Days with no editorial information	-14
No. Days with no record of publication	-42
<hr/>	
No. Days used in study	100 (64%)

TABLE III
RECONSTRUCTION ISSUES IN EDITORIALS
DURING PART I

<i>ISSUES:</i>	<i>No. Ed.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Totals</i>	<i>%</i>
Restoring state government	56	—	41.8%	
State elections-constitutional convention	34	—	25.4%	
Debt repudiation	12	—	8.9%	
To seal congressional delegation	10	—	7.5%	
Radicals	31	—	23.1%	
Freedmen	31	—	23.1%	
Care of Blacks	10	—	7.5%	
Freedmen's Bureau	9	—	6.7%	
Black suffrage	12	—	8.9%	
President Johnson	16	—	11.9%	
Totals	134	—	99.9%	

TABLE V

DATA FOR PART II—December 21, 1865 - November 9, 1866

Total No. Days	324	
No. Days with no editorial information	-60	
No. Days with no record of publication	-87	
No. Days editorial "cut out"	-2	
No. Days used in study	175	(54%)

TABLE V

RECONSTRUCTION ISSUES IN EDITORIALS
DURING PART II

<i>ISSUES:</i>	<i>No. Eds.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Totals</i>	<i>%</i>
Reconstruction and Congress	61	—	50.4%	
Radicals	25	—	20.7%	
Replies to Northern Newspapers	17	—	14.0%	
Joint Reconstruction Committee	7	—	5.8%	
Civil Rights Bill	4	—	3.3%	
Fourteenth Amendment	7	—	5.8%	
"Radical" Conv. — Philadelphia	1	—	.8%	
Partisan Politics	51	—	42.1%	
President Johnson	28	—	23.1%	
Conservative-Union Conv. (Phil.)	17	—	14.0%	
"The Democracy"	6	—	4.9%	
Freedmen	9	—	7.4%	
Suffrage	2	—	1.6%	
Blacks	3	—	2.5%	
Freedmen's Bureau	4	—	3.3%	
Totals	121	—	99.9%	

TABLE VI

DATA FOR PART III—Nov. 10, 1866-March 31, 1867

Total No. Days	142	
No. Days w/no Editorial information	-36	
No. Days w/no record publication	-40	
No. Days w/Editorial "cut out"	-1	
No. Days used in study	65	(46%)

TABLE VII

RECONSTRUCTION ISSUES IN EDITORIALS
DURING PART III

<i>ISSUES:</i>	<i>No. Eds.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Totals</i>	<i>%</i>
Radical Reconstruction			29	54.7%
Congressional Reconstruction...	15	— 28.3%		
Fourteenth Amendment	7	— 13.2%		
Alabama Reconstruction	7	— 13.2%		
Freedmen			10	18.8%
Suffrage	8	— 15.0%		
Treatment	2	— 3.8%		
President Johnson			7	13.2%
Impeachment	5	— 9.4%		
Support for	2	— 3.8%		
Supreme Court			7	13.2%
Totals			53	99.9%

ALABAMA CHEMISTS IN THE CIVIL WAR

by

Richard C. Sheridan

Alabama scientists of both the pre- and post-Civil War periods are for the most part virtually unknown.¹ During the Civil War the chemists of Alabama, although small in number, made valuable scientific and military contributions to the cause of the South. They served as chemists, soldiers, and purchasing agents.

The average age of the nine chemists discussed in this study was 29 in 1861; the youngest, Eugene A. Smith, was then only 19, and the oldest, Charles T. Mohr, was 36. Three of the chemists were born in Alabama, while three were born in foreign countries. Most of them saw action during the War; at least three were wounded, and one, Prof. N. F. Briggs, died from his wounds. Seven of the chemists were professors at the beginning of the War; a few were also druggists and geologists as well as chemists. Caleb Huse was a graduate of West Point and Eugene A. Smith had been a cadet at the University of Alabama, but none of the others had any prior military training. All of those who served in the army became officers, except Prof. Briggs, who died in 1861. Most of the chemists returned to Alabama after the War, and several became outstanding leaders in the fields of science and education.

Norman F. Biggs

Pvt. Norman F. Briggs, who died from wounds received in the first battle of Manassas, was apparently the only Alabama chemist to be killed in the War. He was born in Alabama about 1835, and he listed his home as Dallas, Alabama, when he entered the army.² He studied at Florence Wesleyan University, and became professor of chemistry, geology, and mineralogy at this institution in 1859³ where he was noted for

¹Weymouth T. Jordan, *Alabama Review*, I (1948), 9.

²Military Service Record of N. F. Briggs, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery.

³*Annual Catalogue of Florence Wesleyan University*, 1859-60.

his well-delivered and interesting lectures.⁴

On April 28, 1861, Professor Briggs enlisted with the "Lauderdale Volunteers" commanded by Capt. Robert McFarland. This unit left Florence immediately for Virginia where it became Company H, 4th Alabama Regiment of Infantry.⁵ The regiment was in the midst of heavy fighting at Manassas on July 21, 1861, and Company H suffered terrible losses.⁶ Of 58 men in line of battle, 10 were killed, 23 wounded, and many of the survivors received bullet holes in their hats or clothing. Pvt. Briggs was seriously wounded in the thigh, and could not be removed from the battle area. He lingered for several days and the date of his death is unknown, although he was still living when Captain McFarland wrote an account of the battle for the *Florence Gazette* on July 29, 1861.⁷

William Gesner

William Gesner, druggist, geologist, and analytical chemist, was born in Nova Scotia on May 24, 1827. He emigrated to the United States as a young man and found employment in a drug store in Boston, Mass. Later, he operated drug stores in Georgia, and about 1860 he became mining engineer and manager of the Montgomery Mining and Manufacturing Co. which operated copper mines in Talladega County, Alabama.⁸

Answering the call for volunteers, Gesner joined the Confederate Army in 1861 at Montgomery. He was assigned to duty as an ordnance sergeant in Nitre and Mining District No. 10 under Major W. H. C. Price, superintendent. In 1864, Sgt. Gesner was sent to England by the Confederacy to obtain information on the manufacture of ammunition and the construction of acid works. While in England he purchased munition machinery for the mining company with which he was connected using private funds raised by the sale of cotton. This machinery was shipped to Havana, but there was no opportunity

⁴*The Southern College Magazine*, V (November 1859), 73.

⁵*Florence Gazette*, May 8, 1861.

⁶*Florence Gazette*, July 31, 1861.

⁷*Florence Gazette*, August 14, 1861.

⁸Thomas M. Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (Chicago, 1921), III, 648.

to run it through the blockade and it was finally sold there to satisfy the duty.

Gesner was struck in the head by a spent ball at Meridian, Miss., and was thought to have been killed. The blow left him slightly deaf the remainder of his life.⁹ His valuable scientific library was burned aboard a train enroute from Talladega County to Milledgeville, Ga. to prevent the cars and their contents from falling into the hands of the invading Yankees.

After the War, Gesner opened a drug store in Birmingham, but soon turned his attention again to geology and analytical chemistry. Later, he and his brothers unsuccessfully operated a tin mine in Clay County, Ala. He died in Birmingham on April 17, 1887.

Caleb Huse

Major Caleb Huse was born in Newburyport, Mass. on Feb. 11, 1831. After graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1851, he served as assistant professor of chemistry, mineralogy, and geology at West Point from 1852 to 1859. While on leave in 1860, Lt. Huse spent several months traveling in Europe. Upon his return, he secured an extension of his leave to accept a position as professor of chemistry and commandant of cadets at the University of Alabama, and assumed his new duties in the fall of 1860.¹⁰

Huse resigned his commission in Feb. 1861, and soon entered the Confederate Army as a captain of artillery, and was later promoted to major.¹¹ His decision to join the Confederacy can be explained only by his contact with Robert E. Lee and other Southerners at West Point, and the fact that he was living in the South at the time. Early in April 1861 he was summoned to Montgomery and designated by President Davis to go to Europe to purchase arms and military supplies. Ar-

⁹Pension Application of Mrs. Mary V. Gesner, Dec. 16, 1920, Alabama State Department of Archives and History.

¹⁰Dumas Malone, editor, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1946), IX, 428; Caleb Huse, *The Supplies for the Confederate Army—How they were obtained in Europe and how Paid for* (Boston, 1904).

¹¹Confederate Military Service Record of Caleb Huse, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

living in Liverpool on May 10, he reported the market ill supplied with small arms: "Everything has been taken by the agents from the Northern States," Huse wrote, "and the quantity which they have secured is very small," but he immediately contracted with a London firm for the production of 10,000 Enfield rifles with interchangeable parts.¹² Huse's first instructions were limited, but after the battle of Manassas, he was given a free hand to purchase arms "from whatever places and at whatever price," and by the end of 1862, he had purchased 157,000 arms, large quantities of powder, some artillery, infantry equipments, harness, sabers, percussion caps, saltpeter, lead, and other items.¹³ Many of the arms were purchased from the Austrian government. Major Huse used rare foresight in also buying and shipping large supplies of clothing, blankets, cloth, and shoes without special orders to do so.

Major Huse was watched closely by agents of the United States, and some Southerners suspected him of disloyalty and financial malpractice. There is no reason to question his loyalty or business honesty; on the contrary, he showed great initiative and energy in his work, and his efforts were a tremendous contribution to the military strength of the South.

Major Huse returned to the United States in 1868 and successfully operated a military school for boys in Highland Falls, N. Y., for over 20 years. He died there on March 11, 1905.

Nathaniel T. Lupton

Dr. Nathaniel Thomas Lupton, professor of chemistry and physics at Southern University, Greensboro, Alabama, from 1859 to 1871, was employed by the Confederate Nitre and Mining Bureau as a chemist with headquarters at Selma, Alabama.¹⁴ The nitre works and powder mill at Selma were in full operation by 1863, and the mill was producing 500 lbs. of pow-

¹²*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series 1, IV, 344. Hereinafter cited as ORA.

¹³Frank E. Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords—Josiah Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance* (Austin, 1952), 89.

¹⁴T. A. DeLand and A. D. Smith, *Northern Alabama—Historical and Biographical* (Chicago, 1888), 150; Joel C. DuBose, *Notable Men of Alabama* (Atlanta, 1904), II, 170.

der per day at the end of 1864. The Federal Army reported in 1865 the destruction of 18 buildings, 5 furnaces, 16 leaches, and 90 banks at the nitre works, and 7 buildings, 6,000 rounds of artillery ammunition, and 70,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, together with 14,000 lbs. of powder at the powder mills and magazine.¹⁵

Dr. Lupton was born near Winchester, Va., on Dec. 19, 1830, graduated from Dickinson College, and taught chemistry at several Southern schools before and after the War. He was professor of chemistry and fifth president of the University of Alabama in 1871-74, and state chemist and professor of chemistry at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute from 1885 until his death at Auburn on June 11, 1893.¹⁶

John W. Mallet

Dr. John William Mallet, a British subject, was born in Dublin, Ireland, on October 10, 1832, and received his education partly in Dublin's Trinity College and partly at Gottingen under the famous Wohler. He came to the United States in 1853 on a visit and remained to become chemist to the Geological Survey of Alabama and professor of chemistry at the University of Alabama from 1854 to 1861. In 1857, he married Mary E. Ormond, a daughter of Judge Ormond of the Alabama Supreme Court. During this period, he made an extensive study of the culture of cotton, analyzed several rare minerals, and re-determined the atomic weight of lithium.¹⁷

Dr. Mallet entered the Confederate Army as a private, but was promoted to first lieutenant and made aid-de-camp to General R. E. Rodes on Nov. 16, 1861.¹⁸ Mallet saw action at Williamsburg and Seven Pines in Virginia, and later while inspecting a fort at Charleston during the siege of 1863, he received a minor wound.¹⁹ In May 1862, Gen. Gorgas, chief of ordnance recognized Mallet as "an eminent practical chemist" and obtained his transfer with a promotion to captain and assignment as superintendent of all ordnance laboratories in

¹⁵Malcolm C. McMillan, *Alabama Confederate Reader* (University, Ala., 1963), 417.

¹⁶Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, IV, 1077.

¹⁷F. P. Dunnington, *Journal of Chemical Education*, V (1928), 183.

¹⁸Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography*, XII, 223.

¹⁹W. D. Miles, *Chemical and Engineering News*, XXXIX (April 3, 1961), 109.

the Confederacy. Dr. Mallet reorganized the Southern arsenals and depots, planned the ordnance laboratory at Macon, Ga., and inspected forts and armies. He set up standard procedures for the different laboratories and arsenals, and supervised the manufacture of powder, percussion caps, and other munitions.²⁰ Mallet designed a new type of shell, with a polyhedral cavity, which was introduced in September 1862 and rapidly became popular with the army; he also developed the use of potassium chlorate and sulfur as a substitute for mercury fulminate in caps. He was promoted to major in 1863 and to lieutenant-colonel in 1864.²¹ Of Mallet, Gen. Gorgas wrote, "A more earnest and capable officer I cannot imagine."

After the War, Dr. Mallet made a survey for petroleum in Louisiana and Texas. He was a professor at several Southern universities, and in 1882 he served as president of the American Chemical Society. He died in Virginia on November 7, 1912.

Charles T. Mohr

Dr. Charles Theodore Mohr was born in Esslingen, Germany, on Dec. 28, 1824, and studied chemistry at Stuttgart under the renowned Fehling. After working as a chemist in Brunn, Austria, he emigrated to the United States in 1848 and found employment with a German manufacturer of chemicals at Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1857, he moved because of his health to Mobile, Alabama, and established the town's first "Deutsche Apotheke" shop.²²

At the beginning of the Civil War, the Confederacy established several pharmaceutical laboratories to manufacture medicines. The laboratory at Mobile was operated by Dr. Mohr, who described his role as follows: "the government requested me to meet the challenge by taking an active part in the direction of a laboratory for the preparation of pharmaceuticals and indigenous products. I agreed to do so. There was no lack of materials for the construction of apparatus: a drug grinding mill, a steam distillation apparatus and a contrivance

²⁰Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords—Josiah Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance*, 113, 150, 168, 189, 192.

²¹Confederate Military Service Record of J. W. Mallet, National Archives.

²²E. A. Smith, "Charles Theodore Mohr" in *Plant Life of Alabama* by Charles Mohr (Montgomery, 1901).

for the production of high-grade alcohol from corn whiskey; only glass vessels for the laboratory were largely absent. The task of examining the medical supplies smuggled in through the blockade from Europe, like opium, morphine, quinine, and others, were also assigned to me." Dr. Mohr found that the French quinine was "highly adulterated" throughout the War, and that "confusions occurred rather often between quinine sulfate and morphine sulfate, frequently resulting in harm in the hospitals."²³

Dr. Mohr is best known for his extensive studies on the botony of Alabama, which he started in 1860 and continued until his death. He published nearly 100 papers, including an extensive memoir of over 900 pages on *Plant Life of Alabama*. His death occurred at Ashville, N. C., on July 17, 1901.²⁴

William H. C. Price

In 1856, Professor William Henry Clay Price, a graduate of the University of Alabama and a native Alabamian, became the first science teacher at Tuskegee Female College where he presided over "a new and valuable apparatus," and "Cabinets of Minerals, Fossils, and Curiosities." In the fall of 1859, Prof. Price joined the faculty of the new East Alabama Male College at Auburn where he lectured on geology.²⁵

On July 10, 1861, Price entered Confederate service as captain of the "Tom Watts Rebels"; this company was officially designated Co. K, 12th Alabama Regiment of Infantry.²⁶ After service in Virginia, Capt. Price received a transfer to the scientific arm of the Nitre and Mining Bureau. He was promoted to major and appointed superintendent of Nitre and Mining District No. 10 with headquarters at Montgomery and Auburn, Ala.

During the first 9 months of 1864, Major Price's district produced 34,716 pounds of nitre from nitriaries located at Selma,

²³H. H. Cunningham, *Doctors in Grey—The Confederate Medical Service* (Baton Rouge, 1958), 138, 147.

²⁴Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, IV, 1214.

²⁵Rhoda C. Ellison, *History of Huntingdon College 1854-1954* (University, Ala., 1954), 15, 43.

²⁶Confederate Military Service Record of W. H. C. Price, National Archives.

Mobile, Talladega, Tuscaloosa, Montgomery, and Columbus, Ga. The nitriary at Montgomery was operated with 60 Negro laborers, 25 mules, and 15 wagons. The sheds covered 48,000 sq. ft., and the beds contained 124,000 cu. ft. of material made up of "1/3 lime or ashes, 1/3 ammonical matter, and 1/3 other matter." Analysis of the beds gave an average nitre content of 3.3 oz. per cu. ft.²⁷ The nitre plantation at Mobile was operated by two supervisors, 29 slaves, and 5 free Negro conscripts. In July 1864, the plantation used 498 loads of manure, dry dirt, night soil from privies, lime, carcasses of cows and horses, water from stagnant ponds, and plaster.²⁸

The contractors and employees of the Nitre and Mining Bureau were frequently harrassed by conscript officers, but Major Price ordered his people to "disregard all interferences" and report such incidents to him to be "properly dealt with."²⁹ In the closing days of the War, Major Price ordered his men to "hold themselves in readiness to report to me here at a moment's notice to aid in defense" of Montgomery.³⁰

One historian wrote that Price was editor of the *American Grocer* magazine after the War, but no mention of him could be found in copies of the magazine ranging from 1869 to 1920.³¹ No other information on Price's post-war career was found.

Eugene A. Smith

Dr. Eugene Allen Smith, geologist and chemist, was born in Washington, Alabama, on Oct. 27, 1841. Upon graduating from the University of Alabama in the spring of 1862, he enlisted in Co. K, 33rd Alabama Regiment while serving as its drillmaster at Greenville, Ala. He was soon elected second lieutenant and served until December 25, 1862, when he was detailed as state captain in the Alabama Corps of Cadets at the University. He remained in this capacity until the end of the

²⁷ORA, Ser. 4, III, 695.

²⁸A Complete Record of the Nitre Plantation at Mobile, Ala. for the month July, 1864, Nitre and Mining District No. 10, Tennessee Historical Society Collection, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville.

²⁹*Selma Morning Reporter*, June 10, 1864.

³⁰*Montgomery Daily Mail*, April 8, 1865.

³¹Letter from R. Dean Shippy, Food Business Institute, University of Maryland, to Richard C. Sheridan, June 25, 1970.

War, and also served as instructor in tactics. When the cadets were called into service in 1864, Smith commanded part of the Corps while in the field.³²

After the War, he studied in Germany and received the Ph. D. degree from Heidelberg University in 1868. Upon returning to America, he was appointed assistant professor of chemistry in the University of Mississippi. In 1871, Dr. Smith was elected professor of chemistry and mineralogy in the University of Alabama and served until 1913. He was appointed state geologist in 1873 and held this position continuously for the remaining 54 years of his life. He died in Tuscaloosa on Sept. 7, 1927.

Edward Q. Thornton

Professor Edward Quinn Thornton was born in Wilkes County, Ga., on May 13, 1832, and graduated from the University of Alabama in 1853 with the B. A. degree. He was assistant state geologist of Alabama in 1853-55, and he earned the M. A. degree in 1857. After further study in Europe, he became professor of chemistry, natural history, and modern languages at Howard College.³³

Prof. Thornton entered military service on April 7, 1861, as a private in the "Eufaula Rifles," Co. B, 1st Regiment of Alabama Infantry. After service at Barrancas Barracks, Florida, Thornton re-enlisted in the spring of 1862 as a second lieutenant in Co. K, 39th Regt. of Ala. Inf.³⁴ Following several months of service in Tennessee, he was placed on detached duty and ordered to report for recruiting and conscript duty in Barbour County, Ala.³⁵ In 1863, he was commended for his competence and efficiency, and promoted to first lieutenant. In October 1863, he was cited for courage and devotion on the field of battle and placed on Roll of Honor.³⁶ Early in 1864, he was assigned as aid-de-camp to Brig. Gen. H. D. Clayton, who com-

³²Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, IV, 1579; Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 263.

³³Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, IV, 1669.

³⁴Military Service Record of E. Q. Thornton, Alabama State Department of Archives and History.

³⁵Confederate Military Service Record of E. Q. Thornton, National Archives.

³⁶ORA, Ser. 1, XX, Pt. 1, 973.

manded a brigade of Alabama regiments. Thornton served with distinction in this capacity and as acting assistant adjutant general for General Clayton during the defense of North Georgia and Atlanta.³⁷

Prof. Thornton resumed his duties at Howard College in 1865 and also served as president in 1868. He was professor of chemistry at the Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1875-1878. He died at Auburn on May 13, 1878.

³⁷ORA, Ser. 1, XXXVIII, Pt. 3, 834.

"KOLBITES" VERSUS BOURBONS: THE ALABAMA GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION OF 1892

by

Karl Rodabaugh

When Governor Thomas Goode Jones delivered his first inaugural address in late December of 1890, he stood before a new state legislature composed of a majority of Alliancemen in the lower chamber. That incoming legislature—to be called the Alliance Legislature—was evidence of the extent of Farmers' Alliance political involvement in Alabama, while the nature of its membership pointed to the success of that involvement. For in a few short years, a fledgling political force, nurtured on undiminishing agrarian discontent, had demonstrated graphically the potential of its appeal to the sense of disadvantage that prevailed among the farmers of Alabama.

As Jones spoke, the Alliance representatives were wrapped within the loose-knit fabric of the Democratic party. They were tied to the diverse elements of the Democracy by the binding powers of tradition and of white supremacy. As did their fellow party members, the Alliancemen ostensibly ran for office, were elected, and came to Montgomery to save their wives and daughters, their society and their religion, from the "traitorous" Republican gubernatorial candidate, and "the niggers." But the Alliancemen also came to preserve the rural way of life, to present the Alliance list of grievances, and to restore a favorable equilibrium to government.

It was significant that tradition and white supremacy had not shown their normal strength in the recent hotly-contested battle for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. Only unfair rulings on contesting delegations to the convention, and a coalition of conservative—or Bourbon—forces, had prevented Commissioner of Agriculture, Reuben F. Kolb—a man proclaimed by the Democratic press to be a criminal and a traitor to the party of white rule—from standing in Jones's stead. In the race for the nomination, Kolb had combined an appeal to the farmers' sense of disadvantage with the expression of traditional Democratic rhetoric. Before the conservatives combined

against him, Kolb's position had made him the first choice for governor of five times more delegates to the 1890 convention than the number of those who had favored Jones above all other candidates. And probably for the same reason, Kolb had gained convention support from those black-belt counties where the Farmers' Alliance was strongest. If that group of black-belt counties threatened to ally with Alliance counties outside the black-belt, they could offer the greatest challenge to the increasingly powerful industrial wing of the Democratic party. The danger was clear: if pleas to the agrarians were channeled in the wrong direction, or if agricultural discontent and agrarian legislative desires were ignored, the ordinary Democratic ideology might not prevent more serious party division than that experienced in 1890.

Governor Jones represented the established social, economic, and political leadership of Alabama, and his election made conspicuous a changing balance of power within the Democratic party. With the first administration of Jones—who was closely linked to Louisville & Nashville Railroad interests—following the two pro-business administrations of Governor Thomas Seay, increased influence for the industrial wing of the party seemed assured.¹ But the possibility still existed that Kolb might hold to his standard some black-belt Democrats who wished to resist the encroaching industrial wing. On the other hand, Kolb's black-belt support notwithstanding, the threat of his candidacy generally had closed the ranks of those Bourbons with an anti-industry bias and those favoring big business. In fact, as Jones came into office, the industrial wing of the Democracy seemed to be taken command of the party machinery.²

Yet the conservatives recognized the need to make some appearances of replying to the agrarian grumblings upon which Kolb had capitalized. Therefore, in his inaugural address, Governor Jones called for ballot reforms (without property or edu-

¹Sheldon Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism in Alabama* (Princeton, N. J. 1969), 19; Carolyn R. Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism in Alabama: The Gubernatorial Administration of Thomas Goode Jones, 1890-1894" (M.A. thesis, Auburn University 1968) 19, 304; M.H. Smith to Jones, February 16, 1893, *Official Correspondence of Governor Thomas Goode Jones* (hereinafter cited as Jones Papers), Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery.

²William Warren Rogers, "Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1959), 72.

cational qualifications for voting) and advised that the convict lease system be reformed; furthermore, he advocated better education for the masses of both races. Although his overall tone was quite conservative, and he declared the promotion of industrial prosperity to be the major task lying before his administration, Jones had infused his inaugural with a measure of progressivism not seen in recent inaugurals. And his cautious reform proposals dove-tailed nicely with his well-known position on the demands of the farmers: farmers should present their grievances to the Democracy and the party would listen. Moreover, in 1890 the Bourbons declared they understood the needs of the Alliance and listed them as organization among the farmers, defeat of the trusts, and procurement of equitable taxes. Of course, a Democratic party led by the Bourbons was the agency through which all those needs and all other needs of the agrarians could be realized.³

But Jones and the party essentially failed to come to grips with the problem before them, for neither the Governor nor his Democracy had the capability to react properly to fundamentally economic issues. For controlled as they were by laissez faire philosophy, they could not espouse governmental remedies for agricultural distress. The conservatives, therefore, offered the agrarians only strained sympathy, faulty understanding of their needs and goals, and the restrained reforms found in Jones's inaugural. The Bourbons, chained to a policy of party unity that bound them to avoid divisive issues, therefore were forced to resist broad-based political movements that were rooted in discontent and based on new, magnetic ideas. Indeed, their resistance had already become strong enough that in order to discredit the Alliance ideology in the eyes of Democrats, conservatives had attempted, unsuccessfully, to get radical demands on the formation of a third party adopted at the Alliance state convention of August, 1890.⁴

Conservative thought, viewed as the correct thought by its adherents, assumed that there would not be wide-spread challenge to the established system, and quite naturally, offered

³Tuscaloosa Gazette, December 4, 1890; Joseph R. Hollingsworth, *The Whirligig of Politics: The Democracy of Cleveland and Bryan* (Chicago, 1963), 8.

⁴Charles Grayson Summersell, "A Life of Reuben F. Kolb" (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1930), 38-39.

no alternatives to that system. Dedicated to industrial progress, the Bourbons could not and refused to acknowledge the friction against their outlook created by the drag of agricultural deterioration in Alabama. Jones and the conservatives, moreover, derived additional cause for promoting industrial progress *from* agricultural distress. They assumed that agricultural prosperity would follow in the wake of business prosperity and, therefore, called for the farmers to follow them in the quest for progress.⁵

The agrarians, however, were involved in a crusade of their own making. To them agricultural prosperity heralded all other good times. The basic assumption of their thought, then, was antithetical to that of the conservatives. The result was that the agrarians could not be led by the Bourbons; nor could the conservatives follow the agrarians.

In Alabama, the white man's Democracy was the parent of both the Bourbon and the agrarian outlooks. Because the two viewpoints were crowded together within the same party structure, they could remain together either so long as the appeals of tradition and of white supremacy allowed that structure to be expanded to include both trains of thought or until the increasing agrarian numbers cramped the edifice to the point of collapse. In 1892, the Bourbon leadership refused to permit expansion of the top-level party structure to include agrarian leaders such as Kolb. But the agrarian contingent had grown too large, and their leaders had developed ambitions too strong, to suffer the constraints of the conservatives. Therefore, the agrarians collected the baggage reminiscent of their common heritage with the Bourbons and, with it in tow, separated themselves from the untenable union.

By 1891, the Alliance clearly was engaged in political combat with the conservatives. Vindictiveness toward Kolb — the symbol of the Alliance political involvement — appeared frequently in the Bourbon press, following a period of relative peace during the 1890 state elections. His recent efforts to gain office as a Democrat were called an invitation to destruc-

⁵Hugh Charles Davis, "An Analysis of the Rationale of Representative Conservative Alabamians, 1874-1914" (Ph. D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1964), 252-256.

tion, and he was deemed to be a "crank" in politics.⁶ At the same time, the Bourbons increased their use of the Negro threat, now tying it in directly with the Alliance by claiming that the Alliance fostered black alliances, that Negro Alliancemen outnumbered their white counterparts, and that Negroes were on the verge of receiving political recognition in the councils of the white alliances. In the *Mobile Register's* opinion, the result would be a new Loyal League formed to take the lands of whites and to secure federal election controls.⁷

The conservative position was made plausible by growing political insurgency among the Negroes. Rifts between the whites, such as in the recent race for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, offered the blacks the opportunity to gain a measure of political influence. Negro leaders, consequently, became more vocal in their criticisms of both the Republicans and the Democrats.⁸ Perhaps the blacks realized that the Bourbons' appeals to the whites on matters of race either were being received differently or were affecting the whites differently, causing the race issue to seem less potent than before.

At any rate, the political skirmishes in Alabama were rapidly developing into a battle. The state legislature became the battleground when the Alliance legislators pushed through that body a measure making the office of Commissioner of Agriculture elective, an action taken because it was felt that the Alliance candidate could win that office in a popular election. In addition, Alliance legislators joined with a group of Birmingham businessmen, led by future governor Braxton Bragg Comer, in a campaign for which popular support was sought, to increase the regulatory powers of the railroad commission and to secure laws providing for better local rates and equalizing all rates. The Alliance goal seems to have been more to oppose the Bourbons and to create the impression of fighting the entrenched forces than to achieve actual reforms, for the railroad bills were eventually quashed quietly in an

⁶Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, December 25, 1890, August 21, 1890.

⁷Albert Burton Moore, *History of Alabama* (University, Ala., 1934), 618; William Warren Rogers, "The Negro Alliance in Alabama," *Journal of Negro History*, XLV (1960), 43-44.

⁸C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, La., 1951), 220-221.

Alliance dominated legislative committee. Even Kolb had discussed the best methods of defeating the bills with officials of the Alabama railroads. The Alliance legislature also defeated a bill — to prohibit free passes on railroads for public officials — that had been introduced after being recommended by Governor Jones. Another bill, to provide legal sanctions for separate but equal facilities for blacks and whites in public transportation, was passed into law without opposition. Before the bill became law, however, S. M. Adams, President of the State Alliance and leader of the Alliance legislators, took the opportunity to reveal his conformity with Alabama's developing racial social structure. He introduced a motion to strike the word *equal* from the bill, and withdrew his motion only after conservative legislators had pointed out that, if it were carried, the proposed Jim Crow law might be declared unconstitutional.⁹

The positions of Kolb and of the Alliance called for subterfuge and exposed a measure of uncertainty. Alliance legislature hoped to promote the impression that the Bourbons were unresponsive to the needs of the people; therefore, they blocked conservative gestures at reform. On the other hand, the Alliance representatives failed to introduce any sweeping proposals for change. At the same time, Kolb appealed to industrial interests for support and declared, simultaneously, in speeches throughout the state, that the conservatives were not doing anything for the farmers. But he offered no alternatives to the present situation — except himself. Probably Kolb and the Alliance hoped to avoid divisive issues because they still sought to capture the Democratic party from within, as they had tried in the 1890 race.¹⁰

This came at a time when farmers were suffering from increasing agricultural distress and, consequently, were more willing to listen to proposals for ending their distress. Bumper

⁹William Warren Rogers, "Reuben F. Kolb: Agricultural Leader of the New South," *Agricultural History*, XXII (April, 1958), 118; James F. Doster, *Railroads in Alabama Politics, 1874-1914* (University, Ala., 1951), 90-92, and "Were Populists Against Railroad Corporations? The Case of Alabama," *Journal of Southern History*, XX (1954), 396-397; *Montgomery Advertiser*, January 23, 1892; Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism*, 45-46.

¹⁰*Birmingham News*, November 29, 1891; Rogers, "Agrarianism," 334.

crops of corn and other grains produced price declines in 1891, with cotton crops also large and the price of the staple similarly declining. Foreign shortages, however, had brought farmers to the conclusion that greater returns than normal were to be expected, and they had over-extended their credit in order to take advantage of the situation. Then prices below their expectations formented a ground swell of discontent. Although he apparently did not realize his actions undermined the traditional Democratic ideology he espoused, Kolb took advantage of the dissatisfaction and sought to cast the Bourbons in the role of scapegoat for the mounting problems of the farmers.¹¹ This led one conservative Democratic observer to remark, "The country people are full of prejudice and have been made to believe they have been badly treated."¹²

Governor Jones was informed of the sentiment among the agrarians, and very soon his supporters were at work trying to soothe the farmers' jaundice. Kolb, they said, failed to cite the wrongs upon which he based his condemnations. In addition, claimed the conservatives, farmers make up a majority of the state legislators and have received every law they have demanded.¹³ In the Bourbons' minds there was no reason for the unhappy agrarians to look outside their party for help.

But national political developments after 1890 pointed toward the establishment of a third party which could attract discontented agrarians. The attendant ideological conflict, arising from the appearance of new programs and new slogans that clashed with the conservative political formula, demanded a clear-cut stand. Kolb and the Alliance, however, were being swept along by the political tides. It was not yet apparent to them that soon they would be compelled to hold firm and to wage war on the Bourbons from without the Democratic party.

On the national level, the Southern Alliance was ripening its political ideology and amplifying its political involvement. A meeting was held in Ocala, Florida, in December, 1890, with

¹¹Solon J. Buck, *The Agrarian Crusade* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1920), 103; George Rutledge Gibson, "The Financial Excitement and Its Causes," *Forum*, XV (June, 1893), 485-486; Albert Burton Moore, *History of Alabama and Her People* (Chicago, 1927), I, 730-731; *Birmingham News*, November 29, 1891.

¹²D. C. White to H. C. Armstrong, December 25, 1891, Jones Papers.

¹³*Troy Messenger*, March 3, 1892.

delegates attending who represented the Northern and Southern Alliances, the Colored Alliance, and the Knights of Labor. Alabama State Alliance delegates, chosen at the August, 1890 Alliance state gathering, were S. M. Adams, R. W. Beck, and J. P. Oliver. The Ocala convention endorsed a modified sub-treasury plan including the land-loan idea of the Northern Alliance as well as the earlier crop-loan scheme of the Southern Alliance, and a platform was adopted that closely paralleled the St. Louis Demands of 1889. In addition, the Southern Alliance absorbed the Colored Alliance. Perhaps mindful of the attacks that such absorption would bring from the Bourbon press, the Alabama delegates stood on the side of white solidarity by denouncing the Lodge Force Bill pending before the United States Congress. Also at Ocala, Northern delegates intensified their efforts to form a third party and sought strong southern support. Southern Alliance delegates, however, generally opposed the third party movement because they still hoped to gain control of the Democratic party.¹⁴

But the third party movement was carried further by its proponents. Although at Ocala the Supreme Council of the Southern Alliance chose to avoid settling the question of a third party, the convention voted to hold a meeting at St. Louis in 1892 for the purpose of making a final decision on that question. Many delegates wanted to begin a third party immediately, and they called for a convention to be held in Cincinnati in May, 1891, to implement their goal. Due to the nature of the Cincinnati meeting, the majority of the delegates at Cincinnati represented northern farm and labor groups; southerners totaled only 36 of about 1,400 delegates. The money issue received greater attention in the discussions than at earlier conventions, but the demands finally set forth were very similar to those adopted at St. Louis in 1889 and at Ocala in 1890. A third party was definitely formed, with formalities of organization left for the forthcoming St. Louis meeting to conclude. But southern delegates vociferously opposed the dec-

¹⁴Montgomery *Advertiser*, August 16, 1890; Sidney Fine, *Laissez Faire and the General-Welfare State: A Study of Conflict in American Thought, 1865-1901* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1956), 310; Solon J. Buck, *The Granger Movement: A Study of Agricultural Organization and Its Political, Economic and Social Manifestations, 1870-1880* (Cambridge, Mass., 1913), 304; Tuscaloosa *Gazette*, December 11, 1890.

laration that Negroes would be welcome to participate in the new party. Southern fears of splitting the Democratic party and of raising the spectre of Negro rule soon were simultaneously aroused and seemingly placed in a position of secondary political importance by action of the Supreme Council of the Southern Alliance. In a conference held at Indianapolis in November, 1891, the Supreme Council, without commenting on the question of Negro participation, gave qualified support to the third party movement.¹⁵

The Ocala convention and the rapidly developing third party movement spurred the Alabama State Alliance to action. In February of 1891, State Alliance president S. M. Adams proclaimed that allegiance to the Ocala Demands were required of all Alliancemen; and he further ordered that members refusing to support the Demands be issued withdrawal cards and that they be suspended from the Alliance.¹⁶ The third party movement produced a different reaction. Commenting on the lack of success experienced by Jerry Simpson — Northern Alliance leader of the third party movement — as he tried to build southern support, the *Montgomery Advertiser* summarized the mood of Alabama Alliancemen: Southern Alliance members, the *Advertiser* said, “are very unwilling to leave the Democratic party to co-operate in a Third party movement.”¹⁷ Part of the reason for this stemmed from the belief of Alliance leaders

¹⁵Robert Wayne Smith, “A Rhetorical Analysis of the Populist Movement in North Carolina, 1892-1896” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1957), 30, 34-36; Theodore Saloutos, *Farmer Movements in the South, 1865-1933* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1960), 123; John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1931), 430-431, 221-222. Following the Cincinnati meeting, factors important to the future of farm-labor political cooperation became apparent. The groups wanted to cooperate, but farm organizations sought labor support only on the terms of the farmers. Moreover, few real representatives of labor had attended the Cincinnati convention, and Terence V. Powderley, Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, realizing the unfavorable position of labor, opposed involvement of his organization in the third party movement. But the composition of the Knights was changing, and as the Knights moved away from the direction in which Powderley wanted the group to go, he could not prevent the group from becoming entangled in the third party movement. See: Gerald N. Grob, “The Knights of Labor, Politics and Populism,” *Mid-America*, XXIX, new series (January, 1958), 17-19.

¹⁶Rogers, “Agrarianism,” 327.

¹⁷*Montgomery Advertiser*, January 23, 1892.

that they could capture the Democratic party and bring an end to bossism and oligarchic rule in Alabama. Charles P. Lane, Alliance leader, Kolb supporter, and editor of the Huntsville *Mercury*, opposed the third party movement because he was convinced that the Alliance would gain control of the Democracy.¹⁸ Nevertheless, throughout 1891 some local alliances declared that reforms were needed more urgently than party loyalty and, consequently, announced their common cause with the third party.¹⁹ But at its 1891 meeting — held in August at Brundidge, Pike County, and attended by over 8,000 Alliance partisans, the State Alliance endorsed all the Ocala Demands, and declared adamantly against the creation of a third party. Also, the state gathering ordered those alliances that had subscribed to the third party movement to disclaim their actions and to steer clear of the third party in the future.²⁰

The heralded St. Louis convention convened in February, 1892, and completed organization of the Populist party. Delegates present represented the Southern Alliance, Northern Alliance, Colored Alliance, Knights of Labor, Grange, and Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association. The new party's platform listed planks on land, finance, and transportation, but it was essentially a categorized and modified version of the original St. Louis Demands, although the subtreasury system was advocated if a better method for distributing the nation's currency to the people could not be developed. To fill nominations for the 1892 national election, the St. Louis meeting provided for another convention to be held at Omaha, Nebraska, July 4, 1892. Southern strategy mapped out for the approaching election called for an alliance between the South and the West, unification of farmers and laborers, and political cohesion between poor whites and Negroes. Southern fears of splitting the white vote were to be placated.²¹ But an incident at the convention

¹⁸T. A. Street to Robert McKee, September 10, 1891, Robert McKee Papers (hereinafter cited as McKee Papers), Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery; Rogers, "Agrarianism," 334.

¹⁹Rogers, "Agrarianism," 334-337.

²⁰Montgomery *Advertiser*, August 15, 1891. At its 1890 state convention, the Alliance, after waiting until the 1890 state elections were over, had adopted the St. Louis Demands of 1889. See: Montgomery *Advertiser*, August 16, 1890, and Tuscaloosa *Times*, August 13, 1890 (misprinted as August 12, 1890).

²¹Fred A. Shannon, *The Farmers' Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897* (New York, 1945), 320; Smith, "Rhetorical Analysis," 39-40; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 252.

emphasized the difficulty of that task: A delegate from Alabama strenuously objected to a proposal for unanimity in the election of William Warwick — a Negro leader of the Virginia Colored Alliance — as assistant secretary of the new party.²²

Although the Populists completed their natural organization early in 1892, the establishment of a state and local substructure required more time. In Alabama, the spreading conviction that reforms were more important than party loyalty had produced endorsements of the rising new party in 1891; and by the following year, alliances in some areas of the state were prepared to defy the rulings of the State Alliance and join the Populists. Joseph C. Manning — soon to be a delegate to the Omaha nominating convention where he would deliver a speech depicting the distraught state of America — led in the formation of the Alabama Populist party. Toward that end, he participated in the creation of the first Populist group in the state in Clay County in April, 1892.²³ Manning later characterized the movement as “an effort of the masses of the whites to free themselves from the rule of the black-belt Democratic party of the old slave-owning type.”²⁴ It was clear that some Populists now meant to fight the Democracy to the death without rather than from within the party. When Kolb spoke before Clay County farmers in April, proclaiming his loyalty to the Democracy and advising all good Alliancemen to remain Democrats, he was criticized sorely for his adherence to the Democratic party and informed crisply that the Populists wanted nothing to do with his kind.²⁵

Although Kolb and the Alliance gave it no real encouragement, the Populist movement in Alabama proceeded to become statewide. When the presidents and executive boards of the various southern state alliances met in Birmingham in early May they declaimed any connection with the Populist party,

²²Jack Abramowitz, “The Negro in the Populist Movement,” *Journal of Negro History*, XXXVIII (July, 1953), 263.

²³George Harmon Knoles, *The Presidential Campaign and Election of 1892* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1942); Henry Pelham Martin, “A History of Politics in Clay County during the Period of Populism from 1888-1896” (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1936), 29-34.

²⁴Joseph C. Manning, *The Fadeout of Populism* (New York, 1928), 60, quoted in Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 247.

²⁵Rogers, “Agrarianism,” 352-353.

and reiterated their support of the Ocala Demands.²⁶ This was done to present a united front on the third party issue and to dispel fears of splitting the Democratic party and, thereby, the white vote. A few days later, answering a call from Kolb and officers of the Alabama State Alliance, numerous Alabama leaders of the Alliance, the Colored Alliance, the Knights of Labor, and the Populists met in Birmingham for a large conference. Conspicuous among the assembled delegates were S. M. Adams, R. W. Beck, and Colonel E. T. Taliaferro, representing the Alliance, and J. C. Manning, representing the Populists. The conference organizers hoped to coalesce the various groups into a solid mass supporting Kolb and adhering to the Alliance position, and sought to put off any attempt to form a state-wide Populist party. Under their guidance the meeting adopted the St. Louis Demands of 1892, but refused to endorse the new party. After the conference was officially adjourned, however, Manning and about twenty-five other delegates formed the Populist State Executive Committee and completed organization of a state party.²⁷

The new party received immediate criticism from the Democratic newspapers. One account claimed that the Populists were in reality a subversive Republican group linked with Benjamin "Beast" Butler — the personification of Radical Republican rule — in a plot to crumble the solid South and to lay waste to the section.²⁸ The *Alexander City Outlook* said of the Populist party, "It is composed of sore heads, independents, and filled with . . . wild lunatic ideas."²⁹

In 1891, Kolb appeared in Birmingham with Populist leaders Jerry Simpson and Mary Elizabeth Lease. Although Simpson and Mrs. Lease were going through the South advocating the Ocala Demands and the third party, Kolb discounted any third party intentions for the Alliance. Some alliances criticized him for not jumping on the Populist bandwagon, but Kolb felt that it was wiser to stay within the framework of one-party politics; and this, indeed, seems to have been what

²⁶Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 243.

²⁷Rogers, "Agrarianism," 355-356.

²⁸*Alexander City Outlook*, cited in *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, May 12, 1892.

²⁹*Ibid.*

he wanted to do.³⁰

While the Populist party was becoming a new entity in Alabama politics, Knob was working to secure the 1892 Democratic gubernatorial nomination. He kept himself before the public by constantly travelling across the state to speak before agrarian meetings and by using the farmers' institutes as political rostrums. Kolb and his supporters had begun their political activities as early as January, 1891. When he announced his candidacy July 21, 1891 — almost a year before the state convention, Kolb shattered all precedents of Democratic politics.³¹

Kolb raised a plea for an end to bossism and machine rule in Alabama and claimed that the Bourbons had cheated him out of the nomination in 1890. It followed that some individuals would link the Democratic machine to the plutocratic elements supposed by many people to be oppressing the masses. Foreseeing this and hoping to capitalize on the attendant resentment of the entrenched interests, the Huntsville *Mercury* announced that the ensuing campaign would be a fight between the corporate-money forces and the farmers candidate and man of the people — Reuben F. Kolb.³² Kolb, however, repudiated this idea: "I am friendly to corporations," he said, "and I am also friendly to the best interest of the men whom the corporations employ." Kolb maintained that corporations "are . . . necessary to the workingman and to the general well being of the community." As his conclusion, he announced, "I am not fighting corporations, I am trying to be just to all. My election will work no harm to organized capital."³³

Kolb had never shown any antagonism to business or industrial interests, and in the new campaign he attracted the support of many progressive-minded Birmingham businessmen and lawyers, including Peyton G. Bowman, J. J. Altman, Colonel

³⁰John Bunyan Clark, *Populism in Alabama* (Auburn, Ala., 1927), 123; William Warren Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896* (Baton Rouge, La., 1970), 194, and "Agrarianism," 333-334, 334n.

³¹Albert S. Preston to Jones, January 19, 1891, Jones Papers; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 118-119.

³²Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 119n.

³³Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 9, 11, 1891, quoted in Doster, "Were Populists Against Railroad Corporations?," 397.

B. L. Hibbard, and Colonel E. T. Taliaferro. (Taliaferro had been chairman of the resolutions committee in the 1890 Democratic State Convention.) A Birmingham Kolb Club, created for the race and comprised of business and labor leaders, counted its members in the hundreds. Under the direction of Warren S. Reese, ex-Mayor of Montgomery and a close personal friend of Kolb, so-called Citizens' Alliances sprouted up across the state. These groups admitted individuals, such as lawyers and businessmen, who were ineligible for regular alliance membership and, thereby, revealed a movement to broaden the base of Kolb's support.³⁴

Alliancemen likewise formed clubs to boost their candidate; but Kolb was losing some former Alliance backers both as a result of his decision to avoid the third party movement and because he seemed to many Alliancemen to be transforming the brotherhood into a wholly political machine. Other factors also caused Kolb's Alliance support to dwindle. Although cooperative economic programs had attracted farmers to the Alliance, when the economic programs failed, many Alliancemen became bitterly frustrated and disillusioned and dropped out of the organization. Others failed to understand how Alliance political entanglements could benefit the farmers.³⁵

As Kolb portrayed Governor Jones as an enemy of the farmers and of the alliance, a backdrop of heightened agricultural distress made the picture vividly realistic, and political matters added to the image. In September, 1891, Kolb's term expired as Commission of Agriculture. The office had been made elective by the state legislature, and a commissioner would be chosen in the 1892 state elections. Several local alliances, however, demanded that Jones re-appoint Kolb for the interim.³⁶ Jones, naturally, avoided providing his opponent with an open political forum and named in his stead Hector D. Lane, Alliance leader from Limestone County and a Kolb partisan in 1890. Kolb, on the basis of the recent act making the commissionership elective, maintained that Governor Jones had no

³⁴Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 123; Rogers, "Agrarianism," 336-337.

³⁵Houston Cole, "A History of Populism in Tuscaloosa County" (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1927), 58; *Birmingham News*, January 9, 6, 1892. The *Montgomery Advertiser*, April 30, 1892, claimed that many Alliancemen were declaring their opposition to Kolb because of his untrustworthy character.

³⁶Rogers, "Agrarianism," 338-339.

power to appoint a commissioner and, therefore, refused to relinquish his title. Before he capitulated, Kolb carried the controversy through the Alabama Supreme Court.³⁷ Earlier Alliance criticism of Jones had centered on his veto of an appropriations bill that would have provided funds for agricultural experiment stations under provisions of the federal Hatch Act. Farmers angered by the veto demonstrated and hanged the Governor in effigy; and when the issue of Kolb's tenure arose, newspapers somehow acquired and subsequently printed letters — from Lane to Kolb — that criticized the Governor and revealed that Lane had participated in hanging him in effigy.³⁸ Based on the appointment controversy, the Hatch Act veto, and the Lane disclosures, many alliances censured Jones.³⁹ The Montgomery Alliance *Herald* even denounced him as a traitor.⁴⁰

Kolb's campaign presented him as the candidate of the farmers and of the people and as the leader of the legitimate Democratic party. Because that position hinted at serious division among the Democrats, the Republicans contemplated supporting Kolb as a method of promoting Democratic schism.⁴¹ And perhaps because most political discussions took place between farmers sitting on country store porches and probably did not dig very deeply into issues that have acquired historical significance, Kolb failed to give much attention to the controversial Ocala Demands and to the free silver issue. Rather, he attempted to capitalize on the farmers' sense of disadvantage by linking Jones with forces the people resented, and he called for the Democratic party to return to the basic principles of Thomas Jefferson. Under Kolb's leadership, the agrarians were led to conclude, the party would mold a society in which the common man could contend with those factors influencing his life. In contrast, Jones and the machine became symbols for all that was wrong with Alabama.⁴²

³⁷*Ibid.*, 338-340; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 122-123.

³⁸Robert D. Ward and William Warren Rogers, *Labor Revolt in Alabama: The Great Strike of 1894* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1965), 40; Rogers, "Agrarianism," 340; Chappel Cory to Jones, September 8, 1891, Jones Papers.

³⁹Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 197.

⁴⁰Jones to Robert McKee, December 29, 1891, McKee Papers.

⁴¹Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 119, 123.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 120-121.

Toward that end, Kolb's advocates heaped abuse on the Governor. They hinted that Jones was a Republican; and a frequent charge cited him as an enemy of the toiling masses.⁴³ The *Alliance Herald* called him a scoundrel and alleged that he had failed to pay debts he owed to a minister and to a poor widow.⁴⁴ Constant references to fraud and corruption in the 1890 race for the nomination put Jones in the position of defending himself and the regular Democracy.⁴⁵

The "Kolbites," also, played on the racial prejudices of Alabama's whites in their efforts to discredit Jones. Jones was said to have ridden in a parade with Negroes during reconstruction.⁴⁶ Because he had proposed in his inaugural that school funds be allocated to the state's segregated schools without considering the total taxes paid by each race, Jones was labeled a foe of the white school children.⁴⁷ While Jones advocated a paternalistic racial policy — whites were to help blacks improve their position, and a moderate tone was to prevail in order to create satisfaction with white supremacy, some of Kolb's partisans expressed their conviction that Negroes could not be advanced.⁴⁸ In essence, they refuted the paternalistic racial system. The most effective allegation, however, held that the Governor had pardoned a Negro described as a known rapist.⁴⁹ Coming at a time when racial tension prevailed — lynchings of Negroes in Alabama reached the highest totals for all time in 1891-1892, rumors that the pardoned black was a rapist contributed to his being mobbed upon his release from prison.⁵⁰ And because it aroused some powerful factors in the creation of Negrophobia — sex and the rape complex, the question of the alleged rapist's pardon strongly affected even some of Jones's staunchest supporters. The Governor was notified of

⁴³*Ibid.*, 121.

⁴⁴Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 143, 143n.

⁴⁵Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 120.

⁴⁶*Mobile Register*, November 20, 1891; Joseph Hodgson to Jones, November 19, 1891, Jones Papers.

⁴⁷Thomas Goode Jones, "The 1890-92 Campaigns for Governor of Alabama," *Montgomery Advertiser*, September 17, 1911, reprinted in *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XX (1958), 672.

⁴⁸Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 26-27; Jones, "The 1890-92 Campaigns," 672.

⁴⁹John H. Vandiver to Jones, May 25, 1892, Jones Papers.

⁵⁰Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism*, 43; John H. Vandiver to Jones, May 25, 1892, Jones Papers.

this and advised to cover up the incident by claiming that he had been misinformed of the details of the case.⁵¹

Although Kolb and his partisans had been quite active for months, Governor Jones waited for the normal time to officially declare his candidacy. Throughout most of 1891, however, Jones's friends exhorted him to begin the race, as other regular Democrats had done, in order to stop the rising tide of Kolb support.⁵² Finally, the Governor initiated his campaign with a speech in Birmingham on October 16, 1891. He pictured himself as a farmer and based his candidacy on party precedent and his sound business administration.⁵³ And his advocates announced that he sought the nomination to preserve the Democracy and white supremacy.⁵⁴ Party leaders told Jones that it would be undignified for the incumbent governor to become intrinsically involved in the fracas and advised him to delegate most of the work to subordinates.⁵⁵ But lack of support among regular party officials and local figures, such as probate judges, forced the Governor to carry the weight of his campaign.⁵⁶ Although Senator Morgan and Hillary A. Herbert (Alabama congressman soon to be Cleveland's Secretary of the Navy) endorsed Jones, the threatened divisiveness of the race caused numerous Democrats to withhold their aid.⁵⁷ The Governor, obviously worried about the outcome, hired a man to follow Kolb across the state in order to transcribe his speeches; and Jones also retained a private investigator who would peer into Kolb's past.⁵⁸

The Bourbons focused their campaign on the question of Kolb's integrity, thereby making the race a battle of personalities. Charges used in 1890 were resuscitated: conservative

⁵¹John H. Vandiver to Jones, May 25, 1892, Jones Papers.

⁵²Jones to McKee, November 9, 1891, McKee Papers; Albert S. Preston to Jones, January 19, 1891, Jones Papers; Chappell Cory to Jones, September 8, 1891, Jones Papers.

⁵³Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 123; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 119.

⁵⁴Troy Messenger, May 12, 1892; Birmingham News, November 29, 1891.

⁵⁵McKee to Jones, November 13, 1891, McKee Papers.

⁵⁶Joseph F. Johnston to W. M. Byrd, August 20, 1894, Official Correspondence of Governor Joseph Forney Johnston, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery.

⁵⁷John T. Morgan to Jones, May 12, 1892, Jones Papers; Charles G. Summersell, "The Alabama Governor's Race in 1892," *Alabama Review*, VIII (January, 1955), 6-7.

newspapers reminded the voters that Kolb supposedly had committed fraud in a real estate deal and allegedly had used free passes on Alabama's railroads while charging the state for travelling expenses. In the new race, Kolb was charged with padding his expense account with the cost of free lunches.⁵⁹ Since an examination of his accounts as commissioner of agriculture revealed they were slightly over forty dollars in arrears, Kolb suffered condemnation as a proven dishonest public official.⁶⁰ In addition, he was charged with soliciting and accepting bribes.⁶¹ J. G. Guice, Eufaula cotton merchant, accused Kolb of willfully cheating him in a business transaction.⁶² The new scandal received wide press coverage, forcing Kolb to defend himself. He said the matter involved merely an honest error and pointed out that Guice had endorsed him for commissioner after the affair had occurred.⁶³ As further defense, Kolb issued a pamphlet giving an aggrandized account of his career as a cotton farmer.⁶⁴ In other accusations, the Bourbons contended that Kolb had cheated in business on several occasions and that he frequented saloons, often having to be carried from such establishments.⁶⁵

Chappell Cory, Governor Jones's personal secretary, summed up the effect on the "Kolbites" of all the campaign

⁵⁸William M. Lindsay to Jones, November 23, 1891, Jones Papers; T.N. Vallins to Jones, September 9, 1891, Jones Papers.

⁵⁹Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 122.

⁶⁰Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, February 25, 1892. Professor Charles Grayson Summersell, in "Governor's Race in 1892," 12, has concluded that the discrepancies in Kolb's accounts were "more proof of faulty bookkeeping than of intent to defraud."

⁶¹T. N. Vallins to Jones, September 9, 1891, Jones Papers. Vallins, retained by the Governor as a private investigator, wrote of a travelling salesman, Frank A. Knight of David Landreth & Sons, Philadelphia, who claimed to have been asked by Kolb for \$300 in return for an official order that Kolb contemplated placing with Landreth & Sons.

⁶²Birmingham *News*, March 26, 1892.

⁶³*Ibid.*, March 16, 1892.

⁶⁴Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, March 14, 1892; Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 52.

⁶⁵Birmingham *News*, November 29, 1891; "Supplement" to Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, February 25, 1892. Kolb's opponents in Tuscaloosa said he drank so heavily at the White Elephant Saloon, following a speaking engagement, that friends had to carry him to his room in a nearby hotel. Kolb admitted drinking at the saloon (an action not contrary to custom), but denied losing control of himself. See: Cole, "Populism in Tuscaloosa County," 62.

charges: he informed Jones that "Kolb's host don't care a damn what is said against him. It was all discounted last year."⁶⁶ Robert McKee, Democratic journalist, said Kolb "is indebted to his enemies for his prominence and power. To them he owes whatever prospect of success he has in the pending contest."⁶⁷ The personal attacks on Kolb only increased the loyalty of his partisans, for his supporters defended his record and many local alliances passed resolutions confirming their faith in him.⁶⁸ Yet Democratic papers ridiculed the "Kolbites" for their faith in their leader and pictured them as the uninformed masses being led by a dangerous demagogue.⁶⁹

Although the Jones forces aimed the brunt of their attack at Kolb, the Ocala Demands and the issue of party loyalty became major points of argument for the Bourbons. Jones attacked the subtreasury idea and the proposals for government ownership of means of communication and transportation, made at Ocala and St. Louis, as inimical to the "sacred principles" of government.⁷⁰ The Bourbons warned that the subtreasury and government ownership would destroy the dominant laissez faire philosophy, increase the power of government, and expand the jurisdiction of federal courts.⁷¹ As in 1890, the subtreasury was pictured as a boon to northern speculators, but it also was labeled as foolish, socialistic, unconstitutional, class legislation.⁷² The *Advertiser* claimed that government ownership would cost ten billion dollars and would bring federal intervention and dangerous socialism into every phase of life.⁷³ Jones told the farmers their economic distress could be ended only when the South achieved industrial autonomy, and asked them, therefore, to follow his lead in the quest for prosperity and progress and to abandon the Alliance, which he proclaimed to be in league with Republicans who were trying to prevent

⁶⁶Chappell Cory to Jones, September 8, 1891, Jones Papers.

⁶⁷McKee to Jones, January 8, 1892, Jones Papers. "Mr. Kolb is not an able, or wise, or discreet, or practical man, and has been made an important personage in spite of himself," McKee confided to the Governor.

⁶⁸*Mobile Register*, April 18, 1891; Moore, *History of Alabama and Her People*, I, 174.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰Davis, "Rationale of Representative Conservative Alabamians." 252-256.

⁷¹*Montgomery Advertiser*, February 26, 1892.

⁷²Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 45-46.

⁷³*Montgomery Advertiser*, February 26, 1892.

southern industrial autonomy.⁷⁴ The Governor and his closest supporters generally ignored the cries for financial reforms that were gradually centering on the free silver issue, but, privately, Jones opposed free silver.⁷⁵ Although the issue was being evaded because it was a potential rallying point for the Kolbites, some Jones supporters did advocate free silver. Unabashedly, they claimed as their own the free silver issue, and the agrarian proposals to end the ten percent tax on state bank notes and to achieve tariff reductions.⁷⁶ But the Bourbons spent more time informing the voters that Kolb, Adams, and anyone else failing to denounce the Ocala Demands could not be true Democrats, and accusing the "Kolbites" of attempting to tear apart the party and, thereby, endangering white rule.⁷⁷ Obviously, conservatives feared the divisiveness attached to the Demands; one Democrat later called them the "entering wedge that split the Democratic party wide open in this state."⁷⁸

Besides being blamed for Democratic dissension and receiving the label "false Democrats," the "Kolbites" were said to be losing support everywhere and making desperate, wild accusations in a vain attempt to counteract mounting support of Jones. Only greed and evil political ambitions, the Bourbons said, forced Kolb to continue a hopeless race and to dangerously split the Democracy.⁷⁹ In March, Jones and Kolb debated the issues, although, at first Kolb had refused to accept the Governor's challenge. Following the confrontation, the Bourbon press reported gleefully that Jones had made a fool of the former commissioner by showing that his opponent was a desperate politician lacking sincere attachment to any position.⁸⁰

While Kolb declared he was in agreement with the theory of corporate enterprise, his supporters tried to link Jones with railroads and corporations in order to picture the Governor as the friend of plutocracy. This effort was met by charges leveled at Kolb that attempted to prove similar accusations.

⁷⁴Davis, "Rationale of Representative Conservative Alabamians." 252-256.

⁷⁵Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 134.

⁷⁶Troy Messenger, March 3, 1892.

⁷⁷Northport West Alabama Breeze, March 3, 1892.

⁷⁸Statement of E. C. Glover to John Sparkman, quoted in John Sparkman, "The Kolb-Oates Campaign of 1894" (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1924), 3.

⁷⁹Montgomery Advertiser, February 26, May 7, 1892.

⁸⁰Northport West Alabama Breeze, "Supplement," February 25, March 31, 1892.

Kolb also was depicted as a self-seeking politician running a ruthless, corrupt machine and setting quick primaries to prevent the voters from carefully considering the issues. He apparently timed his speeches to conflict with those of the Governor, and definitely sought to keep his followers from attending Bourbon rallies. But charges that the "Kolbites" were planning fraudulent election practices stemmed from statements, made by some of Kolb's partisans, hinting that regular Democratic fraud would be counteracted by equivalent action. Although they were only moderately successful, "Kolbite" boycotts of unfriendly newspapers and Bourbon merchants gave credence to the accusation that Kolb was running a ruthless machine.⁸¹

Since Jones was attacked as an enemy of the Alliance, his campaign portrayed Kolb as an insincere friend. Newspapers disclosed that, during the 1890-1891 legislative session, Kolb travelled outside the state with certain members of the General Assembly to meet with representatives of the railroads in order to decide on the best method for defeating the lower-rate bill that was ostensibly supported by the Alliance. In addition, the bourbons claimed that Kolb used his influence to defeat the anti-free pass bill recommended by Governor Jones.⁸²

Kolb did seek the defeat of the lower rate bill, and in the 1880s he had opposed the Bragg movement to increase the regulatory powers of the railroad commission and even had advocated its dissolution.⁸³ But despite Kolb's apparent willingness to please the railroads, Jones received active support from the railroad interests and large industrialists. For the Governor, mingling traditional economic conservatism and a desire to protect the state's credit with favor for the ideal of the New South, had discouraged attempts to increase railroad regulation and had encouraged efforts to give any feasible

⁸¹Mobile Register, November 20, 1891; Birmingham News, January 6, 1892; Northport West Alabama Breeze, February 18, 1892; Malcolm Cook McMillan, "A History of the Alabama Constitution of 1901" (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1940), 36-37; E. R. Quillins to Jones, January 4, 1892, Jones Papers; Thomas Kermit Hearn, "The Populist Movement in Marshall County" (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1935), 61-62.

⁸²Montgomery Advertiser, August 16, 1890, January 23, 1892.

⁸³Doster, "Were Populists Against Railroad Corporations?," 395; Allen J. Going, "The Establishment of the Alabama Railroad Commission," *Journal of Southern History*, XII (1946), 383-384.

assistance to railroad and industrial developers.⁸⁴

Selection of delegates to the 1892 Democratic State Convention began in late 1891. The Jefferson County Democratic Executive Committee, which had been reorganized in early 1891 under the control of Kolb supporters, proclaimed in August that the composition of the county's delegation would be determined by prorating the delegates on the basis of a candidate's percentage of the vote received in the primary to be held in mid-December.— an unusually early date.⁸⁵ Although Kolb had not been awarded any delegates from Jefferson in 1890, the prorate of the delegates would assure him of some in 1892. Because Jefferson contains Birmingham, which had a large urban population and a significant laboring element, increasingly dissatisfied laborers promised to be a factor in the primary. Both Jones and Kolb realized the importance of this initial confrontation at the polls and, therefore, campaigned vigorously in Jefferson. Charges brought out earlier in the year were rehashed in a heated journalistic war.⁸⁶

As the conservative press predicted, the Governor received the victory, amassing 5314 votes against 4676 for Kolb.⁸⁷ Jones generally captured the urban vote and Kolb the rural. Although he had expected a significant win and the Bourbons claimed a smashing triumph was theirs, Kolb should not have been too disheartened; the prorate gave him twelve delegates to the Governor's fourteen in a county controlled completely by Jones in 1890. Actually, the conservatives were dissatisfied with the results. One Jones supporter blamed the Governor's relatively poor showing on the failure of many businessmen to vote due to long lines and to a lack of patience, on the appearance of a protest vote of resentful Georgia Pacific Railroad employees fired on the eve of the election, on the effect of Jones's ties with railroads, and on the fact that some local Bourbon candidates had secured votes for themselves by secretly working against the Governor.⁸⁸

⁸⁴M. H. Smith to Jones, February 16, 1893, Jones Papers; Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 304, 82-83; James F. Doster, "Railroad Domination in Alabama, 1885-1905," *Alabama Review*, VII (July, 1954), 190.

⁸⁵Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 117.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 122-124.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 117-118.

⁸⁸John C. Carmichael to Jones, December 24, 1891, Jones Papers.

Also in December, the pro-Kolb executive committee of Madison County, in North Alabama, held beat (precinct) primaries to choose delegates to a county convention. Extremely close beat returns led to a deadlocked convention, where each candidate's forces claimed 47 of the 93 delegates. To avoid the creation of contesting delegations, it was agreed that Madison would send an evenly divided delegation to the state convention, with four delegates pledged to Jones and four to Kolb.⁸⁹ The Bourbon press again announced a victory for the Governor and proclaimed that a clean sweep for the conservatives appeared certain. But Kolb was gaining new strength in North Alabama. He had not received a vote from either Jefferson or Madison in the 1890 convention; yet after the Madison convention, the former commissioner controlled sixteen delegates and the Governor eighteen, where previously Jones had commanded all thirty-four delegates. Conservatives noticed the trend and pleaded with the Governor to increase the number of his personal appearances and to put political pressure on pro-Kolb local Democrats.⁹⁰ Senator James Pugh wrote to Robert McKee, "I am disturbed at the apparent certainty of Kolb's nomination."⁹¹

Following the early primaries, the Democratic State Executive Committee held a meeting in Montgomery January 26, 1892, to set the date for the state convention and to devise new rules for selecting delegates. Because friends of the Governor comprised two-thirds of the committee, they succeeded in getting pro-Jones rules adopted. The committee prohibited the prorating of beat delegations to county conventions, in effect making it impossible to prorate county delegations. To give Bourbon newspapers more time to affect the race, it was ruled that the dates of primaries had to be announced at least one month in advance. To prevent supposed Republican participation believed to be helping Kolb, another decree said only known Democrats could take part in the primaries. As in 1890, the committee apportioned county delegations on the basis of a county's last Democratic vote for governor, rather

⁸⁹Richard Lowe to Jones, December 24, 1891, Jones Papers; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 124.

⁹⁰Richard Lowe to Jones, December 24, 1891, Jones Papers; George W. Taylor to Jones, December 18, 1891, Jones Papers.

⁹¹James Pugh to Robert McKee, January 6, 1892, McKee Papers.

than on population. Finally, the state convention was set for June 8 in Montgomery.⁹²

The new rules promised to stifle political minorities within the Democracy. Spokesmen for North Alabama, where the apportionment ruling was resented, called the committee's actions a grab for power by the machine and protested loudly.⁹³ With remarkable foresight, Robert McKee informed H. C. Tompkins, chairman of the state executive committee, that the new rules showed the machine would not conciliate with the "Kolbites" and, therefore, might lead to an open split in the party.⁹⁴

In late January, immediately after the executive committee meeting, Butler County held beat primaries and a convention. Butler, a black-belt county, had gone for Kolb in 1890, and the former commissioner was expected to win in the 1892 beat primaries. Jones, however, achieved an unexpected victory, securing 56 beat delegates to Kolb's 52. The Kolbites failed, therefore, to control the county convention, and the Butler delegation could not be prorated. Faced with the prospect of losing the entire Butler delegation, and with compromise made impossible, Kolb's supporters bolted the convention and held their own gathering where they chose a contesting delegation and a separate slate of local candidates.⁹⁵ "This was the initial step," Professor John Bunyan Clark has said, "in the schism of 1892."⁹⁶

Early the next month, Jones won the beat primaries in Marengo, another black-belt county that had been for Kolb in the preceding race. Although the contest was extremely close, the conservatives gained the upper hand in the convention and awarded Jones the county's entire delegation. The Bourbons, mindful of Kolb's strength, had used all elements of power available to entrenched politicians and had exerted strong political and economic pressure on local Democrats to gain a significant victory.⁹⁷

⁹²Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, February 18, 1892.

⁹³Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 136-137.

⁹⁴McKee to H. C. Tompkins, April 11, 1892, McKee Papers.

⁹⁵Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 14.

⁹⁶Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 126.

⁹⁷Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 14; George W. Taylor to Jones, December 18, 1891, Jones Papers.

The results of the early primaries and conventions pointed out changes occurring in the pattern of each candidate's support since the 1890 campaign. Kolb was showing strength in North Alabama in former Jones counties, and black-belt counties previously for Kolb now fell into the Governor's column. A sectional alignment was becoming apparent; North Alabama counties showed increasing support for Kolb, while the black-belt was becoming decidedly pro-Jones. Because of the political biases of North Alabama, a North Alabama-black-belt sectional alignment of opposing political groups could produce serious division when one group claimed to be battling the machine and plutocracy. The closeness of the 1892 primaries and the determination of both the Bourbons and the Kolbites force the conclusion that extreme division already had developed. Sectionalism and polarization, indeed, became the most salient features of the race.

Lee, Fayette, and Clarke counties chose delegations to the state convention during February. Negroes made up a majority of the populations of Lee and Clarke, but they, apparently were not allowed to vote in the primaries.⁹⁸ Most delegates from Fayette and Clarke had voted for Kolb in 1890, while Lee sent contesting delegations to the last state convention. Rural beats were grossly overrepresented in the Lee County convention; and when the rural vote went overwhelmingly for Kolb, his supporters controlled the rural beats, and therefore the convention, and so pledged the entire Lee delegation to their candidate. The Bourbons complained, justifiably, about the overrepresentation of rural beats, but their complaints failed to affect the "Kolbites." Kolb's forces did not mind an unfair advantage when it worked to their benefit.⁹⁹ Jones won the Clarke primary, with 925 votes to 795 for Kolb. The county convention, nevertheless, divided the delegates evenly between the two candidates, ignoring the Democratic State Executive Committee's recent ruling against prorating delegates.¹⁰⁰ A split convention resulted in Fayette — a North Alabama hill county with a population largely rural and white. To give their contesting delegation legitimacy, the conservatives charged

⁹⁸Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 145.

⁹⁹Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 127n., 128n.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 126.

that Kolb had received illegal Republican votes in some of the beat primaries.¹⁰¹

As Spring approached, other primaries and conventions were held, often being marred by bitter and insoluble partisanship. After an exceptionally acrimonious fight, Kolb secured the Tuscaloosa County delegation.¹⁰² Because his supporters received the nominations for the local offices in Tuscaloosa County, the conservatives began to look in earnest for a way to read the "Kolbites" out of the party. Dismissal of heretics from the regular Democratic fold had been suggested as a means of curbing growing radical power, and even President Cleveland reportedly favored this tactic. But Robert McKee warned that if dismissal were resorted to then the party would be reduced to nothing.¹⁰³ The new Democratic rules revealed that the party leaders did not share McKee's feelings; and the Bibb County race made it apparent how the new rules were to be used. Since Bibb, a white hill county, was strong Alliance and Kolb territory, the Bourbons preferred to cede the Bibb delegation to Kolb without a fight. But after the convention pledged the delegates for Kolb, the Bourbons declared it improper on the grounds that the new rules permitted only Democrats to participate in primaries and that the "Kolbites" were not true Democrats.¹⁰⁴ Marshall, another white hill county, also went easily for Kolb, but the Governor's supporters charged that the recent rulings had been disregarded and, consequently, organized a contesting delegation.¹⁰⁵ The same thing happened in Pickens County.¹⁰⁶ The "Kolbites" might have been breaking the rules, for a large Republican vote helped the former commissioner win in Franklin County.¹⁰⁷ But the conservatives, too, probably ignored the rules when it was to their advantage. After another bitter fight, Jones gained the victory in Barbour, even carrying Eufaula — Kolb's former home. H. D. Clayton (Kolb's former manager), chairman of the county executive committee, led the Governor's campaign in Barbour.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 126-127.

¹⁰²Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, March 3, 1892.

¹⁰³McKee to H. C. Tompkins, July 5, 1891, McKee Papers.

¹⁰⁴Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 127.

¹⁰⁵Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, March 10, 1892.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, June 9, 1892.

¹⁰⁷Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 127.

Numerous Negro-Republican votes seem to have aided Jones greatly.¹⁰⁸

Other contests for delegates failed to end in open dissension, and produced seeming harmony. While Henry and Bullock counties once again pledged their delegations to Kolb, Dallas and Lowndes fell safely in the Jones column as in 1890.¹⁰⁹ But the great number of contesting delegations emphasized the open rifts within the party. A conciliatory move by the Bourbon leaders or the promotion of a candidate acceptable to the two factions might have kept the Democracy intact. But due to conservative intransigence, extreme polarization between the factions for each candidate, and a lack of potential go-betweens, a conciliatory movement failed to develop and a schism became inevitable. By early May, Bourbon press predictions of a Jones victory, based on delegate counts putting most contesting delegations in the Governor's column, appeared alongside statements claiming that Kolb would bolt the party.¹¹⁰

Throughout April, the *Advertiser* said that Kolb would fail to receive the nomination and then would form an independent group.¹¹¹ Later, the *Troy Messenger* printed a letter — from Kolb to W. H. Welch, Populist organizer — that hinted the former commissioner might bolt. The letter served as proof, the *Messenger* said, that Kolb planned to attract Negro and Republican votes in order to split the solid South.¹¹² In reality, Kolb had indicated that the time was not right for an Alabama Populist party and had sought to gain Welch's support while running as a "Jeffersonian Democrat."¹¹³ Fearing a loss of support, he wanted to put off the formation of another group and to represent his faction as the true Democracy. About the same time, Kolb told James A. Street, Populist, that Bourbon

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, Northport West Alabama Breeze, April 21, 1892.

¹⁰⁹Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 127; A. E. Coffee to Jones, December 19, 1891, Jones Papers.

¹¹⁰Northport West Alabama Breeze, May 12, 1892; Huggins, "Bourbonism and Radicalism," 150-151. As early as February, 1891, Senator John T. Morgan had declared that the bitterness of the race appalled him, and that the machine was closing all avenues to conciliation. John T. Morgan to Robert McKee, February 4, 1891, McKee Papers.

¹¹¹Montgomery Advertiser, April, 1892, *passim*.

¹¹²Troy Messenger, July 28, 1892.

¹¹³*Ibid.*; Northport West Alabama Breeze, July 21, 1892.

election frauds and the almost certain certification of Jones's contesting delegations at the state convention "will force two state conventions and two — nominations — I will be the nominee of the simon pure Jeffersonian Democrats, and Jones the nominee of the machine Democracy. . . ." ¹¹⁴ He asked for Street's help in delaying any third party activities until after the convention, and in securing delegates. ¹¹⁵

Then the Montgomery *Alliance-Herald* declared that Kolb would run as the *Alliance* candidate in 1892, regardless of the result of the Democratic convention. ¹¹⁶ In keeping with the course he had outlined, the former commissioner stated that he would not be a party to any independent movement, even if the Democrats failed to nominate him; yet he made it clear that if he were not nominated it would be due to the machinations of the Bourbons. In a speech delivered in Henderson, Pike County, Kolb declared: "They (the Bourbons) are sending up contesting delegations from every county almost, to get up confusion, and in order to swindle me again, but if I am entitled to a majority of the delegates, I tell you I am going to have them." ¹¹⁷ While reaffirming his loyalty to the Democracy, Kolb said he would be selected as the candidate of the "simon pure Jeffersonian Democrats," the group he claimed was the legitimate party in Alabama. ¹¹⁸

More than a month before the state convention, the Anniston *Hot Blast* gave a remarkably accurate description of what Kolb's actions actually would be at the Democratic gathering. Kolb, said the *Hot Blast*, would seek admission of his contesting delegations to the convention and would be refused. A chain of demands and proposals, for a statewide white primary and for agreement upon a new candidate acceptable to both factions, would be met by refusals, leading to a bolt and to Kolb's nomination by his Jeffersonian Democrats. ¹¹⁹

As the delegates began pouring into Montgomery, the pro-

¹¹⁴Kolb to J. A. Street, April 22, 1892, O. D. Street Papers (hereinafter cited as Street Papers), Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹¹⁶Rogers, "Agrarianism," 359.

¹¹⁷Montgomery *Advertiser*, March 27, 1892, quoting Montgomery *Alliance-Herald*.

¹¹⁸Rogers, "Agrarianism," 361; Montgomery *Advertiser*, April 30, 1892.

¹¹⁹Anniston *Hot Blast*, cited in Montgomery *Advertiser*, April 23, 1892.

Jones Democratic State Executive Committee met prior to the convention in order to establish Bourbon control. To make it impossible for the convention to nominate Kolb even in the event that his supporters captured the convention machinery, the committee assumed the power to rule on the validity of each contesting delegation's credentials. Enough Jones delegates were recognized to assure the renomination of the Governor.¹²⁰

Kolb, faced with the reality of conservative power, gathered together his delegates, in several meetings held in McDonald's Opera House, to make plans for the convention and to frame proposals to be sent to the preliminary meeting of the convention. The *Mobile Daily News*, admitting that its earlier fears were not justified, said Kolb's supporters "seemed to be not only good democrats, but men of intelligence."¹²¹ At the Opera House, the "Kolbites" heard their leader claim a majority of the delegates and read a county-by-county list of the contesting delegations, carefully pointing out Bourbon thefts in many of the counties; then they adopted a resolution calling for a joint committee to work out a compromise between the factions of the party.¹²² When the convention convened on June 8, the "Kolbites" were granted a conference with members of the Democratic State Executive Committee. They proposed, without success, that either Kolb delegates be recognized from forty-eight counties or that a statewide white primary be held within thirty days to choose a Democratic nominee.¹²³

Because the renomination of Jones was certain, many Kolb delegates failed to attend the first session of the Democratic convention and gathered with other "Kolbites" in McDonald's Opera House. But because the Opera House assembly planned to organize a bolt, certain key Kolb supporters joined the regu-

¹²⁰Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 64-65; Hearn, "Populist Movement in Marshall County," 49.

¹²¹*Mobile Daily News*, June 9, 1892.

¹²²Rogers, "Agrarianism," 362-363; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 130; Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 65-66.

¹²³Ward and Rogers, *Labor Revolt in Alabama*, 43; Malcolm Cook McMillian, *Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1955), 244-245.

lars.¹²⁴ Hopeful that a split would not occur, the *Advertiser* had said, Kolb's delegates "love their party and white supremacy in Alabama better than they do any man and will do nothing to jeopardize either. They have no desire to see inaugurated a struggle at the polls, and an effort to bring out the negro vote to settle a contest brought on by a scheming and desperate politician. . . ."¹²⁵ But now the Opera House group, acting as a separate convention, appointed a platform committee and adjourned until later in the evening.¹²⁶

At the same time, the conservatives, still fearful that an onslaught by the "Kolbites" might challenge the machine, proceeded cautiously, putting out the platform before making nominations. The Governor had followed his predecessors lead in calling for revisions of the Alabama constitution; and the platform committee advised calling a constitutional convention to reform the suffrage and the educational, financial, and tax systems. But the convention dropped the idea, concluding that it would be too dangerous to hold a constitutional convention while the Alliance was still powerful, that the poor whites, afraid as they were of disfranchisement, would react against the Democracy, and that a divisive issue should be avoided in such an explosive campaign.¹²⁷ As finally adopted, the Democratic platform contained the thirteenth plank, promising suffrage reforms, including the secret ballot, to put the government of Alabama "in the hands of the intelligent and the virtuous. . . ."¹²⁸ Additional planks condemned the Lodge Force Bill of 1890, the Harrison administration, the McKinley Tariff of 1890, the spoils system, and the proposals for government ownership or control of railroads. While advocating a safe, sound, and elastic currency, the Democratic platform criticized the Republicans for failing to provide enough circulating medium. And the Democrats went on record in favor of laws to better regulate corporations, to secure equitable railroad rates, to end the competition of free laborers with convicts, to improve schools, to establish a federal income tax

¹²⁴Mobile Register, June 10, 1892; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 131.

¹²⁵Montgomery Advertiser, June 7, 1892.

¹²⁶Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 131.

¹²⁷McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 249-250.

¹²⁸Official Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention, June 8, 1892 (n. p., n. d.) 10, quoted in Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 213.

to be used for increasing veterans' pensions, and to provide for an elective railroad commission. Although the convention established population as the basis of representation in future conventions, it gave the Democratic State Executive Committee the authority to dismiss from the party any member found to be less than orthodox in his democracy.¹²⁹ The nature of the platform unveiled Democratic intentions of basing the 1892 campaign on conventional national issues while stealing some of the "Kolbite's" most compelling arguments. On June ninth, the Democrats renominated Jones and then adjourned.¹³⁰

As prearranged, the "Kolbites" — now openly calling themselves Jeffersonian Democrats, met the evening of June 8 and nominated Kolb by acclamation.¹³¹ In his acceptance speech, Kolb rehashed the charges of Democratic fraud, advocated ending the convict-lease system, demanded election reforms, and called for a reform platform designed to aid the people.¹³² The convention selected delegates to the 1892 Democratic National Convention and instructed them to vote against Cleveland and Wall Street.¹³³ Faced with the alternatives of following Kolb or staying within the established party, many of Kolb's more conservative supporters — notable among them were Charles P. Lane, influential editor of the *Huntsville Mercury*, and Colonel E. T. Taliaferro — fled to the safety of the regular camp.¹³⁴ The following day, the Jeffersonians, made more unified and homogeneous by the desertion of their more conservative colleagues and by Bourbon recriminations, adopted a platform reflecting the issues that Kolb had raised in his acceptance speech: denunciation of machine control; protection of Negroes in their legal rights; prohibition of competition between convict and free labor; opposition to trusts, rings, and monopolies; govern-

¹²⁹Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 16, 1892.

¹³⁰Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 16, 1892. The *Breeze* reported that Jones received 372 votes and Kolb 68 in the convention balloting. The *Troy Messenger*, June 9, 1892, gave the total as Jones 314 and Kolb 152. Other Democratic nominees were J. D. Barron, Montgomery County, Secretary of State; John Purifoy, Wilcox County, Auditor; J. Craig Smith, Dallas County, Treasurer; John G. Harris, Sumter County, Superintendent of Education; Hector D. Lane, Limestone County, Commissioner of Agriculture; W. L. Martin, Attorney-General. See: Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 16, 1892.

¹³¹Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 68.

¹³²Montgomery *Advertiser*, June 9, 1892.

¹³³Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 19.

¹³⁴Mobile *Register*, May 7, 1892; Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 30, 1892.

mental economy; legislation favorable to labor and farmers; abolition of national banks; expansion of the currency to provide fifty dollars per capita; free and unlimited coinage of silver; equitable taxation and a graduated federal income tax; improvement of the public schools; an elective railroad commission; stimulation of progress in industry and agriculture; and creation of a white primary to chose future Democratic nominees for state offices. Kolb pledged to support all planks of the platform.¹³⁵

The Populists held their state convention in Birmingham in late June. A common desire to see bossism end and rule of the people begin, declared the Populists, caused them to endorse the Jeffersonian Democrats. No Populist slate appeared to split the vote of the anti-Bourbon groups. Before the convention adjourned, however, a heated discussion took place when it was proposed that a Negro delegate be selected to attend the Populist nominating convention at Omaha.¹³⁶

As in the race for the nomination, regular Democratic campaign rhetoric focused on non-economic issues: Kolb's political actions and his character, and white supremacy. Emphasis of non-economic issues promised to decrease the appeal of the Jeffersonian reform platform and to increase Jones's chances for victory.¹³⁷

The Democrats accused Kolb of plotting with Republicans to deliver Alabama's electoral votes to Benjamin Harrison in the 1892 presidential election. As a means for increasing Democratic dissension, the Republican faction led by state boss

¹³⁵Montgomery *Advertiser*, June 10, 1892. Other Jeffersonian nominees were: L. C. Ramsey, Secretary of State; W. T. B. Lynch, Auditor; Thomas K. Jones, Treasurer; J. O. Turner, Superintendent of Education; S. M. Adams, Commissioner of Agriculture; B. K. Collier, Attorney-General. Ramsey and Turner declined to accept their respective nominations. The *Mobile Register* charged Collier with being an applicant for a Republican appointment and advised him to resign from the race. See: *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, June 16, 30, 1892; and *Troy Messenger*, June 16, 1892.

¹³⁶*Northport West Alabama Breeze*, June 30, 1892. T. M. Johnson, a black Populist, attended the Omaha convention as a delegate from Alabama.

¹³⁷William H. Skaggs, *The Southern Oligarchy: An Appeal in Behalf of the Silent Masses of Our Country Against the Despotic Rule of the Few* (New York, 1924), 127-128. See: Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City, N.Y., 1963), 300.

Robert A. Moseley did aid the Jeffersonians, especially in North Alabama. But Democrats also sought and received Republican support.¹³⁸ Republican disorganization and disunity, moreover, prevented the party from playing a significant role in the 1892 gubernatorial election. While Moseley's group favored the expedient of working with anti-Bourbon elements, the followers of William Stevens, Negro Republican leader, refused to have anything to do with the Jeffersonians.¹³⁹

Once the party had been divided, regular Democrats united to save their party at all costs, blamed Kolb for the bolt, and attacked their former brethren with the viciousness characteristic of a blood feud. County executive committees, by virtue of powers given them by the Democratic State Executive Committee, dismissed from the party and dropped as candidates many "Kolbites" who had been selected as Democratic candidates for local offices. As a result of the purge, county meetings were held that usually put up as Jeffersonian candidates those men expelled from the Democracy.¹⁴⁰ In an attempt to disclose the source of the party division, the Northport *West Alabama Breeze* said, "Kolb is responsible for the break in the Democratic party in this state and he and his followers will suffer for it."¹⁴¹ Vindictiveness, such as that present in the statement of the *Breeze*, became part of the anti-Kolb campaign and reached the intensity of that formerly reserved for Republicans. Those individuals following Kolb out of the party "had to contend regularly with foreclosure of mortgages, discharge from jobs, eviction as tenants, exclusions from church, withholding of credit, boycott, social ostracism, and the endlessly reiterated charge of racial disloyalty and section dis-

¹³⁸Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 1892, citing *Memphis Commercial*; *Birmingham News*, January 7, 1892; *Montgomery Advertiser*, February 26, April 30, 1892; Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 23-24, 26; Cole, "Populism in Tuscaloosa County," 71.

¹³⁹Vincent P. DeSantis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question: The New Departure Years, 1877-1897* (Baltimore, 1959), 235-236.

¹⁴⁰Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 30, July 7, 1892.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, July 7, 1892. Robert McKee, unconvinced by Democratic explanations of the bolt, later wrote:

I do not believe that any legally assembled and duly constituted democratic state convention was held in Alabama in 1892. I do not believe it yet. I believe that one of the so-called conventions was revolutionary and that the other was insurrectionary.

McKee to J. E. Cobb, March 26, 1893, McKee Papers.

loyalty."¹⁴² Describing the degree of Democratic animosity toward bolters, Milford W. Howard (a Jones supporter in 1892 who would be elected to Congress in 1894 as a Populist) later said, "It will give you some idea of [the] bitterness when I state that my own father would not hear me speak and said he would rather make my coffin with his own hands and bury me than to have me desert the Democratic party."¹⁴³

While calling Kolb a political boss and a self-seeking politician, whose actions would bring ruin to Alabama, the organized Democracy offered Jones and party orthodoxy as agents of progress and prosperity. As proof that Kolb ruled the Alliance with an iron hand and ran a ruthless political machine, the Democratic press, early in the race, revealed the existence of Gideon's Bands — secret political clubs organized by the Alliance in many counties to ascertain Kolb's strength and to provide evidence for charges of fraud — and implied that the bands were comparable to the Ku Klux Klan.¹⁴⁴ In a message to the legislature, the Governor attacked the political use of the farmers' institutes and recommended strong measures to limit the institutes to the diffusion of practical information on agriculture among the farmers.¹⁴⁵ Also, Democratic editors concluded that Kolb planned to proclaim himself the head of an anarchistic government, install an illegal legislature, turn loose the convicts on the decent citizens of the state, and divide the lands of prosperous Democrats among his followers.¹⁴⁶ In a similar vein, it was said that Kolb's election would end the flow of outside capital in Alabama and reverse the period of prosperity stimulated by the Democratic administration of Governor Jones.¹⁴⁷ The *Shelby Chronicle* portrayed vividly many of the Democrats' worst fears:

¹⁴²C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (rev. ed., New York, 1968), 110.

¹⁴³David Alan Harris, "The Political Career of Milford W. Howard, Populist Congressman from Alabama" (M.A. thesis, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, 1957), 58, quoting "Manuscript Autobiography of Milford W. Howard," 121-122, in possession of Colonel Claude M. Howard, Columbus, Georgia.

¹⁴⁴Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 30, July 7, 1892; Troy *Messenger*, July 14, 1892.

¹⁴⁵Rogers, "Agrarianism," 198-199.

¹⁴⁶Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, July 21, 1892; Hearn, "Populist Movement in Marshall County," 61, 61n.

¹⁴⁷Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 1892, citing Alexander City *Outlook*.

Put Reuben F. Kolb in the gubernatorial chair and your spindles will rust in idleness. The fire will go out in your furnaces; no sooty clouds will ascend from the smoke stacks of Alabama's numerous furnaces; the buzz and whirr of the factory and machine shops will be hushed — business enterprises now being formulated will be still born, and the Raven's wing of desolation will hover over us like a dark cloud. The almighty dollar will be still more scarce and harder to get hold of, all business will be prostrated and all enterprises paralyzed [*sic.*].¹⁴⁸

Although numerous personal attacks on Kolb had appeared earlier, most of the same charges were used again as the Democratic press hammered away at the former commissioner's character. In one fresh allegation, however, the Democrats held that Kolb had sold a man some green watermelons!¹⁴⁹ As part of their overall effort to discredit Kolb and make him seem like an unprincipled office-seeker, the regulars charged that Kolb, who was purposefully avoiding discussion of the Ocala Demands, actually never intended to serve the farmers' interests and purposefully had framed the Jeffersonian platform to dodge the demands of the Alliance.¹⁵⁰

For anyone who doubted the wisdom of supporting Kolb, almost the entire press of the state, which gave Kolb and the Jeffersonians continuous and bitter opposition, provided sufficient evidence, usually unsupported by facts, to conclude that only Jones was fit to be governor.¹⁵¹ If some skeptics failed

¹⁴⁸Shelby *Chronicle*, quoted in *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, July 28, 1892.

¹⁴⁹*Northport West Alabama Breeze*, July 21, 1892; T. O. Smith to Jones, August 22, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁵⁰*Northport West Alabama Breeze*, July 21, 1892.

¹⁵¹Although Kolb earlier had claimed the support of virtually every newspaper in Alabama, he admitted, in April, 1892, that only a handful of papers were on his side. Many of those, faced with economic pressure in some cases, dropped him after the bolt. A small reform press, centering on the *Montgomery Alliance-Herald*, emphasized the need for election reforms, free silver, and other measures designed to better the farmers' condition. See: *Montgomery Advertiser*, April 23, 1892; *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 11, 1892; Rogers, "Agrarianism," 460. Kolb and his followers recognized that press abuse was hurting their chances for victory, but insufficient finances prevented them from effectively combating the Democratic press. See: Reuben F. Kolb, Jr., to J. A. Street, July 13, 1892, Street Papers; Jerry Fountain, Secretary of the Jeffersonian Campaign Committee, to O. D. Street, July 19 and July 22, 1892, Street Papers.

to be convinced by the constant questioning of Kolb's character, the Democrats emphasized the race issue to bring them to their senses.

"The principal and ultimate issue," said Josiah Jernigan, Chairman of the Pike County Democratic Executive Committee, "is the integrity and supremacy of the white race."¹⁵² One Democratic paper began the campaign with a blairing headline: "THE MISSION OF THE SOLID SOUTH IS TO PRESERVE THE PURITY OF THE CAUCASIAN BLOOD, AND THE SUPREMACY OF THE WHITE RACE."¹⁵³ Considering Kolb's alleged use of Negro and Republican voters in the race for the nomination, his association with Populists, and the Jeffersonian plank on Negro rights, the *Troy Messenger* concluded that the essence of his stand was "give me niggers, republicans, third party and independent voters or I'll reap death."¹⁵⁴ The Butler County *Choctaw Advocate*, referring to the Negro rights plank, asked, "Who can look upon the fair and lovely women of this land, and endorse this principle and the man who maintains it?"¹⁵⁵ The plank, an obvious plea by Kolb for black votes, caused black-belt whites to oppose him almost to a man, for white supremacy was the central theme of life in the black-belt. The fact that that section conditioned the thinking of the whites of the state on racial matters is underlined by the manner in which spokesmen for the black-belt, appealing to the racial instincts of North Alabama whites, begged them not to leave the Democracy and doom the black-belt section of the state to Negro rule.¹⁵⁶ And whites everywhere in Alabama were warned that Kolb's election would bring with it political control by the supposedly black-dominated Alliance and, consequently, Negro rule.¹⁵⁷ For anyone who failed to understand the obvious, the Greensboro *Watchman* said, "White supremacy is only to be perpetuated in Alabama by a united Democracy. We must not divide. Such

¹⁵²Rogers, "Agrarianism," 373-374; Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 78; Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, July 28, June 23, 1892.

¹⁵⁷Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 1892.

¹⁵²*Troy Messenger*, July 14, 1892, quoting letter of Jernigan.

¹⁵³*Birmingham Age-Herald*, June 10, 1892.

¹⁵⁴*Troy Messenger*, June 16, 1892.

¹⁵⁵Butler County *Choctaw Advocate*, July 13, 1892, quoted in Rogers, "Agrarianism," 367n.

a course is suicidal."¹⁵⁸ With an air of confidence, the *Chilton View* declared that many "Kolbites" would grasp the importance of the white supremacy issue and "endorse the Jones State ticket and leave Mr. Kolb to his niggers."¹⁵⁹

Although the emotional appeal of the white supremacy issue threatened to submerge economic issues beneath a swelling tide of racial tension and to undermine the previously moderate Democratic stand on race, both the Democrats and the Jeffersonians sought Negro votes, while simultaneously stigmatizing each other as the party of the blacks.¹⁶⁰ Most white members of both parties did not consider black voting a threat to white rule; rather, they were concerned with how the Negro voted.¹⁶¹ In recent elections, black voting had not been a challenge to the Democratic party. But the split in the Democracy made Negro votes the key to victory, and forced the white factions to adopt the expedient of appealing to the blacks.

The Jeffersonians tried to convince Negro voters that supporting Kolb would be in their best interests. And a number of black speakers endorsed Kolb and upheld the Jeffersonian position.¹⁶² Kolb called the Democratic thirteenth plank calling for a more "virtuous and intelligent" electorate an effort to disfranchise Negroes. Indeed, in contrast to the Democrats' thirteenth plank, the Jeffersonian Negro rights plank seemed

¹⁵⁸Greensboro *Watchman*, quoted in *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 25, 1892.

¹⁵⁹*Chilton View*, quoted in *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, June 23, 1892.

¹⁶⁰Senator John T. Morgan wrote, "The negro vote is the bonanza for which every machine man and every recalcitrant is searching." Morgan to Robert McKee, February 4, 1892, McKee Papers. On the significance of the white supremacy issue, Tom Watson, Georgia Populist leader, said:

You might beseech a Southern white tenant to listen to you upon questions of finance, taxation, and transportation; you might demonstrate . . . that herein lay his way out of poverty into comfort; you might have him almost persuaded to the truth, but if the merchant . . . or the town politician . . . came along and cried 'Negro rule!' the entire fabric of reason and common sense which you had patiently constructed would fall, and the poor tenant would joyously hug the chains of an actual wretchedness rather than do any experimenting on a question of mere sentiment. . . .

Thomas Watson, "The Negro Question in the South," *Arena*, VI (1892), 541.

¹⁶¹Rogers, "Agrarianism," 368.

¹⁶²Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 34n.; *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 26, 1892.

to offer blacks protection and might have been interpreted by some voters as the initial step in shaping a black-white coalition. But unless racial prejudices were set aside and a program of common interest to both races was presented, black-white political unification was impossible in Alabama.¹⁶³ In fact, neither Kolb nor his followers resisted the growing trend toward segregation, for the "Kolbites" had proposed, recently, that a white primary be held to select the Democratic gubernatorial nominee. And the Jeffersonians failed to expand the Negro rights issue beyond the simple statement in their platform, while spending considerable time and energy trying to dispel the charge that they were allied with the blacks in order to overthrow the Democracy. Fearing Democratic control of black votes, the Jeffersonians finally asked the Negroes to refrain from voting at all.¹⁶⁴ William Stevens, leader of the Negro Republicans, probably spoke for most blacks when he declared that the Jeffersonian Negro rights plank was fostered only by expediency and that it did not reflect any sincere interest in the rights of blacks.¹⁶⁵

To offset Jeffersonian attacks on their thirteenth plank, the Democrats accused Kolb of seeking to use black voters and charged him with chasing Negroes from the polls during the redemption.¹⁶⁶ Negro audiences heard Democratic speakers, who claimed that their party was the true friend of the Negro,

¹⁶³ Joel D. Murphee to Jones, July 14, 1892, Jones Papers; *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 26, 1892. Professor C. Vann Woodward considers racial prejudice to have been the greatest barrier to political cooperation between Negroes and white Populists. Furthermore, he contends that a program of common interests, appealing both to blacks and to Populism's white audience (which he feels exhibited the most racial prejudice of all groups of whites), was necessary to create and preserve such cooperation. Woodward concludes that the division of the white vote during the Populist era, and the attempts by both Populists and Democrats to use the black vote, produced an increase in racial prejudice and spawned violence directed toward any ideas felt to be dangerous to the southern way of life. See Woodward's *Origins of the New South*, 258-259, and *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (2nd. rev. ed., New York, 1966), 62.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Saunders, "Southern Populists and the Negro, 1893-1895," *Journal of Negro History*, LIV (1969), 249-250; Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, July 28, 1892; James J. Adams to Jones, August 6, 1892, Jones Papers; *Mobile Register*, June 17, 1892; Skaggs, *Southern Oligarchy*, 121.

¹⁶⁵ *Montgomery Advertiser*, October 25, 1892.

¹⁶⁶ *Troy Messenger*, July 12, 1892. Joel D. Murphee advised the Governor to circulate handbills aimed at dispelling the idea that the thirteenth plank would disfranchise Negroes. Joel D. Murphee to Jones, July 14, 1892, Jones Papers.

say that segregated schools had been created to better prepare the black race for the franchise and that Jim Crow laws had been passed in answer to the wishes of Negroes.¹⁶⁷ But Jones speakers emphasized the white supremacy issue before white audiences and deliberately reversed their field before black crowds.¹⁶⁸ And while local campaign workers prepared to manage black voters, the Governor was advised that a "private communication as Governor in a flattering way to a few leading negroes in doubtful localities will go far toward your election."¹⁶⁹ One supporter even asked Jones for "a little money to be used among the floating [Negro] vote."¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, many prominent Negro professionals and farmers endorsed the Governor, and numerous black Jones Clubs appeared across the state, giving rise to predictions that the Negro vote would go overwhelmingly for Jones in some localities.¹⁷¹

While many blacks participated in the campaign within the boundaries set by the whites, many others felt that the explosive atmosphere created by emphasis of the race issue made political involvement unsafe and, following the advice of some Negro leaders, did not take part.¹⁷² One white participant later estimated that "less than one per cent, of those [Negroes]

¹⁶⁷Troy Messenger, July 21, 1892.

¹⁶⁸On one occasion, however, former Governor Watts was quoted as saying, in a speech before a crowd including both whites and blacks, "Governor Jones will be elected by 30,000 majority, in spite of the Alliance, Kolbites, Carpetbaggers [*sic*], scalawags, Greenbackers, Republicans and negroes." Watt's statement reportedly angered the blacks, and Governor Jones was advised to have his speakers exercise more caution in the future. See: Joel D. Murphee to Jones, July 14, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁶⁹W. J. Hilliard to Jones, July 12, 1892, Jones Papers; R. E. Mobley to Jones, July 15, 1892, Jones Papers; Jordan H. Mitchell to Jones, July 18, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁷⁰J. C. Woods to Jones, July 16, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁷¹Montgomery Advertiser, July 27, 1892; Summersell, "Governor's Race in 1892," 24-25; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 136; W. P. Gorman to Jones, July 23, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁷²Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 126; Abramowitz, "Negro in the Populist Movement," 280-281. "The Outlook in politics seems to be dangerous," wrote W. D. Floyd, Negro principal from Opelika, Alabama, to Booker T. Washington. "Unless a change [occurs] between now and election day, many lives will be lost. The majority of the Negroes in Lee County, Ala. have decided to hands off in this election." W. D. Floyd to Booker T. Washington, July 18, 1892, Booker T. Washington Papers, Library of Congress, quoted in Abramowitz, "Negro in the Populist Movement," 280.

of voting age actually registered."¹⁷³

Perhaps because they realized the danger to their fortunes presented by the white supremacy issue, but probably because they lacked the press support needed to win a campaign based on racist rhetoric, the Jeffersonians stressed race less than the Democrats and proclaimed the central issues to be fair election practices and corrupt machine rule. The Jeffersonian position harmonized with the opinions of many of Kolb's supporters, who considered the fight to be against the Democratic machine.¹⁷⁴ Whenever he spoke, the former commissioner, who conducted a strenuous campaign and stumped in even the most remote areas of the state, accused the Bourbons of cheating him out of the nomination in 1890 and in 1892. Styling himself as the candidate of the "simon pure" Democracy, Kolb promised to end what he labeled a conspiracy of corrupt politicians, who intended to perpetuate machine rule based on black-belt overrepresentation, and who had plotted, since 1889, to keep him out of the governor's office because he was a farmer and favored agrarian interests. Following this same vein, Jeffersonian circulars portrayed the Democratic thirteenth plank as a thinly veiled plot to preserve machine rule by disfranchising Kolb's followers, who were described as the down-trodden masses.¹⁷⁵

The election — held the first day of August — apparently

¹⁷³Skaggs, *Southern Oligarchy*, 121.

¹⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 129; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 135; Sparkman, "Kolb-Oates Campaign of 1894," 7; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 228; Hearn, "Populist Movement in Marshall County," 33.

¹⁷⁵Cole, "Populism in Tuscaloosa County," 62; *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 24, 1892; *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, July 21, 14, 1892; Jones, "The 1890-92 Campaigns," 673-674. Financial issues received little attention from either of the principals in the 1892 race. However, insofar as it was expressed in the Jeffersonian platform and the national platform of the Populist party, the proposal to increase the currency to fifty dollars per capita was discussed. Apparently, farmers thought of financial matters as part of a general conspiracy against them of large forces beyond their control and looked upon financial matters simply as further cause to resist "plutocratic" elements. When Cleveland received the Democratic nomination for president the second time in July, and the Alabama Democrats endorsed his administration, the Jeffersonians declared that alliance financial goals had been by-passed in favor of conservative views. Cleveland's renomination was resented in the South. See: Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 241, 315; Shannon, *Farmers' Last Frontier*, 320-321.

took place without serious disturbances, in spite of much bitterness between individuals with opposite political loyalties.¹⁷⁶ The official returns credited Jones with 126,937 votes, and Kolb with 115,490.¹⁷⁷ Kolb carried a majority of the white counties and received most of the white votes, but was defeated by large Democratic majorities in the black-belt.¹⁷⁸ Although one observer concluded, "on the testimony of negroes as well as whites, that the mass of negroes . . . actually voted the Democratic ticket," a later scholar has found it impossible to determine how the blacks really voted due to widespread election frauds.¹⁷⁹ Nevertheless, enough ballots, both black and white, both legitimate and fraudulent were counted for Jones to give him the victory.¹⁸⁰ In order to defeat Kolb, the Democrats had bribed voters, stuffed ballot boxes, voided ballots on the flimsiest of excuses, falsified registration lists, and counted votes of dead men.¹⁸¹ One Democrat, aware that Kolb had received

¹⁷⁶Families were divided and friendships were dissolved; and ministers were dismissed for supporting political views unpopular with their flocks. See: Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 75. P. G. Bowman (Jeffersonian) and Major W. P. Gorman (Democrat) of Birmingham almost came to blows at a Jeffersonian rally in Tuscaloosa. See: *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, July 28, 1892.

¹⁷⁷*Manuscript Election Returns, Alabama Gubernatorial Election, 1892*, Files of the Secretary of State, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹Charles Spahr, *America's Working People* (New York, 1894), 104, quoted in Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 323. See: Abramowitz, "Negro in the Populist Movement," 280.

¹⁸⁰Most historians have concluded that Kolb was defrauded in 1892. See: Rogers, "Agrarianism," 384-385; Sparkman, "Kolb-Oates Campaign of 1894," 6; Moore, *History of Alabama*, 624; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 262. In a letter to a friend, Robert McKee expressed his opinion that the Jeffersonians had been "counted out." McKee to Willis Brewer, August 7, 1892, McKee Papers. To Frank Baltzell, editor of the *Montgomery Alliance-Herald*, McKee wrote, "It is demonstrable to the dullest understanding that you have with you and behind you a majority of the white voters of the state." McKee to Baltzell, August 7, 1892, McKee Papers. Summersell, however, in "Governor's Race in 1892," 27, maintains that it is impossible to determine whether or not Kolb was counted out; but in "Reuben F. Kolb," 78, he finds that enough black votes were returned from the black-belt to offset Kolb's majorities in the white counties. In his acceptance speech, Republican presidential candidate Benjamin Harrison referred to the outcome of the Kolb-Jones race as a prime example of Democratic election corruption. See: DeSantis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question*, 232.

¹⁸¹David M. Gold to Jones, July 16, 1892, Jones Papers; *Troy Messenger*, August 11, 1892; Skaggs, *Southern Oligarchy*, 121-124. The Jeffersonians, also, were accused of election irregularities. See: *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 11, 1892; *Troy Messenger*, August 11, 1892.

the bulk of the white votes and had been "counted out," reacted by criticizing the "idiotic" way the people had voted.¹⁸² S. G. Woolf, Marengo County Probate Judge, informed the Governor, "It took a clear head and a steady hand to sail the old boat thro' the breakers. . ."¹⁸³

In a statement issued to the press immediately after the election, Kolb declared, "I have been fairly and honestly elected by over 40,000 majority and the people of my native state recognize this fact and will see that justice is accorded by placing me at the head of our state government for the next two years."¹⁸⁴ Because there was no contest law that applied to state races in Alabama, Kolb and his followers appealed to the people to create a mass movement in his favor. Toward that end, Peyton G. Bowman, Jeffersonian campaign manager, distributed circulars calling for armed men to collect at county courthouses to assure an honest count of the ballots; and processions of armed "Kolbites," protesting Democratic frauds and calling for a fair count or a hanging, soon marched through a few county seats. But their actions failed to intimidate election officials.¹⁸⁵ A mass meeting of Kolb supporters at the state capitol was planned for November 12, 1892 — the day before the state legislature would convene to certify the election results.¹⁸⁶ And indignant "Kolbites" demanded, without success, that Governor Jones call a special session of the legislature to pass a contest law.¹⁸⁷ If steps were not taken to cor-

¹⁸²W. V. Chardavoyne to Jones, August 8, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁸³S. G. Woolf to Jones, November 11, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁸⁴Birmingham *Age-Herald*, letter of Kolb, quoted in *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 11, 1892. Kolb wrote to O. D. Street, Populist, "We have won a great victory and certainly [are] entitled to the fruits of it," Kolb to O. D. Street, August 14, 1892, Street Papers.

¹⁸⁵McMillan, "Alabama Constitution of 1901," 47-48; *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 25, 18, 1892; S. D. Logan to Jones, August 4, 1892, Jones Papers; *Montgomery Alliance-Herald*, cited in *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 14, 1892. For his part in organizing the protests, Bowman was branded an anarchist by the Democratic press. Frank Baltzell, editor of the *Alliance-Herald*, was compared with the Haymarket anarchists. See: *Northport West Alabama Breeze*, August 18, 25, 1892.

¹⁸⁶Rogers, "Agrarianism," 490-491.

¹⁸⁷Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 81. Jones promised election reforms in his second Inaugural Address. Also, the *Mobile Register* ran a series of editorials advocating a constitutional convention to end ballot box corruption. See: McMillan, "Alabama Constitution of 1901," 4.

rect the wrongs committed in the election, the Jeffersonians warned, the people of Alabama would react in the upcoming national elections by replacing all Democratic congressmen with Jeffersonians, and by defeating President Cleveland, who had been renominated recently.¹⁸⁸

The Alabama State Alliance, meeting for its annual convention at Cullman in mid-August, was overcome by the heated political atmosphere and devoted full attention to partisan matters. At the gathering, General James G. Field, Populist candidate for Vice-President, addressed the crowd of over two thousand.¹⁸⁹ After declaring political independence from the regular Democracy, the Alliance endorsed the St. Louis Demands of 1892 and pledged to help defeat Cleveland in November. Kolb, present for the occasion, openly endorsed the Populist party for the first time. Resolutions were passed that denounced Democratic corruption and Cleveland's monetary policies. And preliminary arrangements were made for a joint Jeffersonian — Populist convention, to be held at Birmingham in September, where mutually acceptable congressional candidates and presidential electors would be chosen.¹⁹⁰

When the Jeffersonians and Populist met in Birmingham on September 15, they selected fusion candidates for all Alabama congressional seats and presidential electors pledged to General James B. Weaver, Populist presidential candidate.¹⁹¹ In effect the two groups had become one; but Kolb and his followers retained their Jeffersonian label and a nominally separate organization. Kolb still claimed to be a loyal Democrat, yet he now thought overt cooperation with the Populists would aid his cause.¹⁹² His stance left him free to adopt those Populist issues he felt were acceptable and to reject those he felt were too radical. The presence of a large contingent of Republicans at the convention was cause for regular Democrat H. D. Clayton, Kolb's campaign manager in the 1890 fight for the Democratic nomination, to inform Cleveland that Re-

¹⁸⁸Summersell, "Reuben F. Kolb," 79.

¹⁸⁹Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, August 18, 1892.

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 13, 18, 1892; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 141-142.

¹⁹¹*Montgomery Advertiser*, September 16, 1892.

¹⁹²Kolb to J. A. Street, August 22, 1892, Street Papers.

publicans controlled the proceedings.¹⁹³

Clayton overestimated the Republicans' role in the new coalition. Kolb had reached an agreement with the Moseley Republicans, who made up three-fourths of the Alabama Republican party, that pledged Jeffersonian, Populist, and GOP votes for Weaver electors and fusion congressional candidates. In return for Republican votes for Weaver, it was promised that if Weaver won in Alabama, but could not win nationally, then Weaver electors would cast their votes for Harrison, provided the votes were needed to give Harrison the victory. National Republicans leaders supported the agreement as a means for preventing Cleveland from gaining Alabama's electoral votes, and considered the fusionists' chances good enough to warrant generous financial aid.¹⁹⁴ But the Stevens Republicans, comprised largely of disappointed Negro office-seekers, who were now in open rebellion against the Moseley faction, refused to support the coalition, put out a straight Republican slate of congressional candidates, and chose electors pledged to the GOP presidential candidate, Benjamin Harrison. In addition, many white Republicans, bitter over the failure of the fusionists to give them a fair share of the nominations and fearful of a similar division of the spoils in the event of a victory, also worked against the coalition.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³H. D. Clayton to Grover Cleveland, September 17, 1892, Cleveland Papers, Library of Congress, cited in Knoles, *Election of 1892*, 196.

15; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 276; Clark, *Populism in Alabama*, 142-143; Knoles, *Election of 1892*, 220-221, 211.

¹⁹⁴DeSantis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question*, 235-236; Harris, "Howard,"

¹⁹⁵DeSantis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question*, 236; Harris, "Howard." 16-17. Jeffersonian-Populist-Republican cooperation produced unusual circumstances. Populists and Jeffersonians tried to enlist former black Mississippi Senator Blanche K. Bruce and Frederick Douglass, Negro leader, in their crusade to persuade Stevens to drop his GOP slate and support the fusion candidates. And the Republican National Committee promised Stevens recognition if he would abandon his ticket. But Stevens, after initially accepting the offer, refused when his supporters indicated that they would not follow his lead, and then he demanded Moseley's head, a price the Republicans declined to accept, as the cost of cooperation. Thereupon, the Republican National Committee disowned Stevens, even though he was pledged to support Harrison. Simultaneously, Christopher Magee, GOP representative, agreed either to pay J. T. Blakemore, white Republican, \$100 a month for four years or to secure him an equally attractive position, if Blakemore would withdraw from the Alabama seventh district congressional race in favor of the fusion candidate, a Populist. See: DeSantis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question*, 236-237.

Threatened by serious opposition, deserted by the Alliance, and maligned as corrupt, unrepresentative, and illegal office-holders, the regular Democrats discussed how best to deal with the present political situation. Practically all Democrats blamed Kolb for the uncommon political rumblings reverberating throughout Alabama, and some of them concluded that if he could be bribed to retire from politics then harmony would be restored. When that plan either failed or was abandoned, Jones was advised to instigate a purge to give the party a new look.¹⁹⁶ If the Democracy was to endure, one regular wrote the Governor, the industrial wing of the party — “the railroad gang of attorneys. . . ,” who had been “running the party,” who were “for revenue only fellows,” and who had shown no sympathy for agrarian grievances — would have to be ousted from the state executive committee.¹⁹⁷ With the Governor linked closely to railroad interests, and the party fighting to survive, a purge of that sort was impossible, even if a majority of the regulars had favored such a divisive tactic, which undoubtedly was not the case. The Democrats, therefore, sought peace by declaring that anyone pledging to vote for Cleveland and the regular congressional candidates would be allowed to participate in future primaries and conventions, regardless of past political associations.¹⁹⁸ In the present political emergency posed by the national elections, the regulars resorted to the race issue and corrupt election practices to win. But a willingness to consider drastic measures for restoring harmony did exist among the Democrats and served to prepare the way for future modifications in the design of the party.

Arguments presented by both the regulars and the fusionists made white supremacy the central issue in the national elections. By portraying the fusionists, including Kolb and Weaver, as dupes of the Republicans, who allegedly hoped to delude the voters into thinking that they were oppressed in order to draw them into a movement designed to enslave them, the Democrats made poignant their warnings that, unless they remained in power, the state would be subjected to integration and amalgamation of the races, heavy taxes to support

¹⁹⁶Rufus Rhodes to Jones, August 31, 1892, Jones Papers.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸Montgomery *Advertiser*, August 12, 1892.

black schools, and rule by Negro congressmen.¹⁹⁹ Not to be outdone easily, the fusionists declared that they were a movement of concerned whites, brought together by a common desire to crush the corrupt Democracy, and claimed that their election would create an all-white party, which would be joined in the state legislature by good Democrats, angered over the degree of Negro participation in their party, to produce enough votes to seat Kolb and, according to some fusionists, to pass a law disfranchising all blacks..²⁰⁰

The fusionists went to the polls with great expectations, but the victory went to the regulars. All Democratic congressional candidates were elected, and Cleveland gained the state's electoral votes by receiving 138,135 votes to 85,178 for Weaver and 9,184 for Harrison.²⁰¹ By using bribery, intimidation, fraud, and control of the election machinery, especially in the black-belt, the regulars reported returns sufficient to elect Democratic candidates and presidential electors. Later, they admitted counting out the fusionists and challenged them to do anything about it.²⁰²

The loss demoralized the fusionists, but it did not erase the significance of their efforts. A political vehicle had been assembled through which dissatisfied voters would express their sense of disadvantage, and through which a large portion, probably a majority, of the white voters of Alabama had rebelled against the Democratic machine. Also Democratic corruption and dependence on Negro votes had been widely publicized. On the negative side, political polarization had helped produce bitter campaigns based largely on race that made a mockery of the Democratic policy of racial moderation.

¹⁹⁹Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, September 15, 22, October 6, August 4, 25, 18, June 23, 1892; Troy *Messenger*, May 12, 1892; Mobile *Register*, September 27, 1892.

²⁰⁰Joseph Columbus Manning, *Politics of Alabama* (n.p., 1893), 15-16; Knoles, *Election of 1892*, 187-188, 192-193; 493n.; Saunders, "Southern Populists and the Negro," 251-252; Mobile *Register*, October 30, 1892.

²⁰¹W. Dean Burnham, *Presidential Ballots, 1824-1892* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1934), 252-255. During the national elections, a crowd pelted Kolb with rotten eggs while he delivered a speech at Gordon, in Henry County. See: Northport *West Alabama Breeze*, October 27, 1892.

²⁰²McMillan, "Alabama Constitution of 1901," 39-42; Knoles, *Election of 1892*, 231, 231n.

After Jones's second inauguration had erased any chance of success, Kolb addressed a letter to the new state legislature asking that a probe be initiated into the recent gubernatorial election. While reasserting his claim to the governor's office and his faith in the true principles of the Democratic party, he summarized the state of affairs in Alabama:

They [the people of Alabama] believe that Democracy means that the people shall rule, and that white people should govern Alabama. They now feel that a few political bosses are undertaking to overthrow a republican form of government in this state. I warn you [the members of the legislature] to stop and reflect. Don't trifle with these people longer. Let justice be done, and sweet Peace will again spread her white wings over our beloved state.²⁰³

²⁰³Message of Reuben F. Kolb to the Alabama General Assembly, December 15, 1892, quoted in Manning, *Politics of Alabama*, 15-16.

BOOK REVIEW

Charles M. Snyder, *The Lady and the President: The Letters of Dorothea Dix and Millard Fillmore*. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975. Pp. 400. \$8.50).

Millard Fillmore is a lesser known American president. Elected the vice president on the Whig ticket in 1848, he was thrust into the presidency when Zachary Taylor suddenly died of "cholera morbus" in July, 1850. He served only two years, but it was a critical period. The Compromise of 1850, a measure which he supported and President Taylor opposed, was before Congress and the change in executive leadership helped push the legislation to congressional approval, possibly averting civil war. Dorothea Dix was a New England spinster with a deep Christian faith and a commitment to serve humanity. A teacher, editor and writer of children's hymns, prayers and moral tales, she became nationally recognized for her fight to improve the care and treatment of the insane. Although in poor health all her life, she fought indefatigably to improve conditions in asylums across the country, a fight which included lobbying techniques before state legislatures and Congress, an unusual involvement for a nineteenth century lady and it is her successful challenge of Victorian concepts of a "woman's place" that has renewed interest in her career among today's historians of American women.

The close friendship between Millard Fillmore and Dorothea Dix, first revealed in their long correspondence, remained hidden, even from their biographers, for well over a hundred years. Fillmore's son, Powers, provided for the destruction of his father's papers in his will and historians had assumed they were burned after Powers died in 1889; however, his executor only packed them away and they were forgotten in a closet until 1969. Almost simultaneously, Miss Dix's papers, part of a private collection since her death, became available to Harvard University. Miss Dix began writing Fillmore soon after he became president and their correspondence of over 150 letters lasted almost twenty years.

The book is well-organized and beautifully edited. There is an introduction and a brief biographical chapter on both Fillmore and Miss Dix which follow their separate lives to

August 1850 when the correspondence commenced. Each letter is prefaced by introductory material which replaces footnotes and smooths the transition from letter to letter. The last letter is dated 1869 although Fillmore lived to 1874 and Miss Dix to 1887.

The letters reveal a close friendship that developed over the years and are historically significant for a number of reasons. Fillmore's letters illustrate his keen political insight, such as his private prediction to Miss Dix that President Pierce would veto her Indigent Insane Bill, a measure to grant public lands for the support of insane hospitals for the poor. Probably her dearest program as well as her greatest failure, this bill was violently opposed by Alabama Senator Clement C. Clay, who, with other Southern congressmen, fought it in Congress and pressured Pierce to wield the veto. The letters shed much light on two lesser known figures not typical of their period, a man and a woman who repudiated extremism and sectionalism, favored compromise and reconciliation, and yet were caught up in the emotional swirls of their own era. The book is enjoyable reading and will be valuable to anyone interested in these turbulent decades of American history.

Leah Rawls Atkins,
Samford University

Clarence L. Ver Steeg, *Origins of a Southern Mosaic: Studies of Early Carolina and Georgia*. Mercer University Lamar Memorial Lectures, No. 17. (Athens, Ga.: The University of Georgia Press, 1975. Pp. 152. \$6.00).

This volume addresses the question, "if the South exists, when did it originate and what were or are its characteristics." Part of the answer, Ver Steeg contends, can be found in the "quilt-like mosaic" of "identifiable enclaves that contribute a special quality to the whole." Diversity is therefore the theme of these essays. In the first two, which deal with the political history of the Carolinas, the author argues that during the 1690s South Carolinians, who never fully accepted the Fundamental Constitutions, took advantage of the proprietors' weakness to achieve a large measure of home rule; during the first

decade of the eighteenth century local leaders could therefore contend among themselves for dominance. But in North Carolina, where the Fundamental Constitutions (which provided for local government at the precinct level) were in force, these developments were considerably delayed. Ironically, therefore, viable local government accompanied weak and unstable provincial government in North Carolina while the situation was reversed in South Carolina. Thus, the eventual separation of North and South Carolina symbolized differences in political experience. The early history of Georgia was even more divergent. No other colony enjoyed and suffered a comparable degree of financial support and political control from London; despite the predominance of strategic considerations, no single purpose motivated its founders; and the settlers, who proved to be an unusually diverse group, frequently failed to share the major aims of the trustees. Friction and an increasing demand for home rule naturally followed. Part of the trouble arose because Georgians, who were at first barred from owning slaves, sought to imitate the planters of South Carolina. Appropriately enough, therefore, the last essay reexamines the beginnings of the plantation system in South Carolina. There, Ver Steeg argues, the production of naval stores first led to the large-scale importation of slaves in the second decade of the eighteenth century.

Although much of this is relatively familiar ground to historians, this volume offers a number of significant new interpretations. Unlike Eugene Sirmans who emphasized the role of religious zeal and proprietary influence in the factional battles of South Carolinians, Ver Steeg stresses local political considerations. In contrast to the recent studies of Converse Clowse and Peter Wood, the present work minimizes the role of rice in establishing slavery and the plantation system in South Carolina.

In general, Ver Steeg's arguments are convincing, and this is a good book. If the quest for originality sometimes prompts him to push a point too far, his ideas are always stimulating. If he occasionally seems to disembody and overemphasize political life, he reminds us that politics alone can often provide an adequate explanation of historical developments. And if once in awhile he also brings out a fascinating point — such

as the relative scarcity of women in early Georgia — without fully developing its significance, he can amplify it in his forthcoming volume on the southern colonies in the eighteenth century. More important, that study will give him the opportunity to make explicit that which is only implicit in the present work — that is, what bound the different pieces of the southern mosaic together.

Robert M. Weir

University of South Carolina

Charles P. Roland, *The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II*. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975. Pp. 228.)

"The South," this book begins, "was fated to be changed almost as much by World War II as by the Civil War." A few lines later the author turns from this demanding historical comparison and the implied causal role of wars in change to survey the state of the South in the immediate postwar period. Then the South existed much as it had before World War II: "the most close-knit and consciously distinctive region in the country." In the next three decades changes came, changes which meant "Southern society after World War II underwent the most severe stress of its entire history." Even so, sectional distinctiveness persisted, giving rise to the paradox of continuity and tradition in the midst of far-reaching change. In *The Improbable Era* Roland emphasizes this paradox, paying particular attention to the subjects of race, politics, economics, education, religion, literature, music and the visual arts. The sweep is broad, and valuable for that. Such scope in less than 200 pages of text suggests the author cannot avoid superficiality. To a satisfying and surprising degree, this author avoids superficiality. Roland presents a discerning discussion of very diverse topics, generalizing cogently, cautiously noting significant qualifications. The recent Southern past is seen to new advantage when set so firmly in so broad a context. The scholar as well as the general reader should find this work rewarding, both for its incisiveness and its sweep. Roland provides an excellent nine-page bibliographical note to orient the reader wishing to pursue special topics farther.

Events since publication, particularly Jimmy Carter's quest for the Presidency, strengthen the author's argument that the mid-40s to the mid-70s constitute an era in Southern history, a time in which the South came nearer the mainstream of American politics. One may reasonably ask, as Roland does, whether the South or the nation made the greater accommodations. Hind-sight brings home the potential for rapid change: "Wallace on the eve of the 1976 presidential campaign appeared still to be the most formidable political force in the South." Though accurate when written, the statement ironically underlines the perils arising from change when appraising the significance of change.

One recurring flaw belies Roland's comfortable command of the issues discussed; Roland repeatedly gives nominal, not "real" dollar figures — \$100 in 1940 and \$100 in 1970 are not, mere numbers aside, the same, particularly if the cost of living tripled or quadrupled during those thirty years. Due to inflation, larger dollar figures in later years might actually represent a decline in real expenditures or real income. Relevant deflators for inflation are available in the sources Roland uses, failure to use them makes the tables and figures overstated real rates of increase — the real rates are only one-third to one-fifth of the figures given.

Harold W. Stanley
New Haven, Connecticut

Foner, Philip S., *History of Black Americans: From Africa to the Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom*. Contributions in American History, No. 40. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975. Pp. 680. \$25.00).

Harry Houdini was a consummate entertainer. His feats were based upon illusions not reality. They were so carefully structured, however, that his audience could not detect the difference. It is equally difficult to detect the difference between illusion and reality when either writing about or reading works that deal with historical phenomena. Philip Foner, much as Houdini was an expert magician, is an expert historian. His credentials as a scholar and researcher in the black experience are impressive. He is very good at condensing information,

but it might be argued that he deals more with the illusions of history instead of reality. His writing reminds one of the ledger of a very conscientious accountant, giving enormous amounts of facts and figures, but failing to capture the essence, the reality of his subject.

Beyond this, in *History of Black Americans*, the first of four volumes in a projected "chief d'oeuvre" on the black experience, he has taken on a near impossible task. To write the history of a people or a culture requires more than a simple grasp of events. It requires an understanding of human nature, an assessment of individual and group needs and desires, an evaluation of the nature of greed, self-interest and self-righteousness, and, above all, an awareness of cultural differences and values. As a survey of events this first volume, which concerns the history of blacks from their African origins to the emergence of the cotton kingdom in America during the second decade of the 19th century, succeeds admirably. As a chronicle of humanity, the book is a failure for it lacks the sensitivity and the empathy necessary to engender in the reader a complete picture of the "peculiar institution."

Foner has amassed an enormous amount of material from primary and secondary sources, and at some points, the book reads like a mini-encyclopedia. Still, there is a large amount of selectivity in what the author has chosen to stress. One could, for example, write entire volumes on the question as to whether racism was a causal or resultant factor of slavery, yet Foner gives this crucial topic relatively short shrift. On the other hand, details and minutia are abundantly available. We learn for example how many slaves were manumitted in this state or that or how many slaves were castrated as a result of one slave insurrection or another ad infinitum. The mass of numbers lose their full impact as the chronology varies from the 15th to the 19th centuries and gives the impression of being the inventory of a dispassionate statistician. Nevertheless, the facts are there: descriptions of the great kingdoms of Africa, details of the horrors of the slave trade, the incredible harshness of the system of slavery on both free and non-free blacks, and the pious statements of the "christian" slaveholders who felt that blacks were better off as slaves in the civilized new world than as free pagans in barbaric Africa.

In the final analysis, the volume, though fully fleshed and well made, has no heart. It is coldly interesting, coldly scholarly, and coldly informative. In Foner's defence, it can be argued that from the perspective of time, it is impossible to comprehend the abject terror and horror suffered by millions of members of one race by another. The reality of the black experience of the period is lost forever and we are left with illusions and inane arguments as to whether slavery was more severe in North America than in the West Indies of South America.

Overall, regardless of its faults, one can recommend *History of Black Americans* not for its scholarship nor for its ease of reading (Foner's style, as that of many historians, runs the gamut from wood to lead), but rather because Foner has pulled together in one place the kind of information that jolts the consciousness of readers whether black or white. While it is true that the book is lacking in spirit, once read it is not easily forgotten.

Alex Boyd
University of Alabama

Rucker Agee, *Twenty Alabama Books*. (Miami, Fla.: E. A. Seeman Publishing Co., 1975. Pp. 109, illustrated, bibliography, \$8.95).

One of the basic criteria for judging an author's book fairly, we understand, is to determine whether he did what he set out to do, skillfully and appealingly, and not what we, the reviewer, may think he should have done.

Viewed thus, we consider Rucker Agee's *Twenty Alabama Books*, not only a first-rate achievement but also a genuinely valuable contribution to Alabama historiography.

Following the pattern used by Stanley F. Horn in his *Twenty Tennessee Books* (1958), Agee explains that he selected his Alabama books "for those who desire to delve into the foundations of our background; for those who want to know what our section of the country was and how it came to be what it is now." But, he adds, in so doing he realizes

that "no two historians or bibliographers" would agree on a final listing of twenty titles.

Each of Agee's books is meticulously described. In addition to straight bibliographical data, the compiler includes an introductory narrative, often uniquely enriching, concerning each author and volume. *Twenty Alabama Books* thus becomes much more than a mere listing — it is in itself in microcosm a sort of vicarious thumbnail history of the state.

As we inferred in our opening paragraph, and as Agee agreeably understands, not all of his twenty titles would necessarily be ours (or yours, perhaps). We would probably accept, say, fifteen. Nevertheless, his selection is well-balanced, solid, and all together a useful guide to those readers who want to establish a firm foundation of nearly five centuries of Alabama history. As a reference source *Twenty Alabama Books* should find a place in many libraries, both in and out of the state.

W. Stanley Hoole

Ernest F. Dibble, *Ante-bellum Pensacola and the Military Presence*. (Pensacola: Pensacola/Escambia Development Commission, 1974, Pp. 143, illustrated, essay on sources, unindexed.)

In his introduction to Vol. III of the Pensacola Series Commemorating the American Revolution Bicentennial, author Dibble alludes to his "antebellum study" which concentrates "upon narrative re-creation and analysis of what has been found among archival sources outside of Pensacola itself." While *Ante-bellum Pensacola and the Military Presence* is no study (in the historian's sense of the term) and while it falls somewhat short of "narrative re-creation," it does nevertheless contain a wealth of hitherto unpublished material concerning Pensacola during the period 1820-1860, largely from the National Archives in Washington (Record Groups 45, 71 and 77) and the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina (Stephen R. Mallory Papers, Nisbet Family Papers, etc.).

Perhaps "miscellaneous compilation" would be a more ac-

curate description of Dr. Dibble's work. He begins by describing the Pensacola Navy yard in the 1820's, including in that chapter two maps (citing the source for only one), two portraits (one a photograph of Rembrandt Peale's "Commodore Lewis Warrington"), one chart, and four previously unpublished letters by Warrington, Commandant M. T. Woolsey, and Building Superintendent Samuel Keepe. In addition are chapters concerning fort-builder William H. Chase, U. S. Senator Stephen Mallory and slave labor at Pensacola's military installations, all of which follow roughly the same format.

Publications of this sort (of which there are many) are generally not noted for their readability or systematic exposition; *Ante-bellum Pensacola* is no exception. Its chief value lies in its making more accessible certain miscellaneous information long hidden in archival repositories and in pointing to a number of neglected research sources. In this respect Dr. Dibble has performed a commendable service based on thorough (much of it original) investigation. Scholars treating this period in future years will be grateful for his efforts, but will no doubt be hampered by the lack of a comprehensive index.

Jay Higginbotham
Mobile Public Library

THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY



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